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Fantasy on "Babylon's Streams," W. H. Harris. (Stainer & Bell.)
Sketch in F minor, Schumann. No. 3 of Four Sketches, Op. 58.
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The Musical Times

AND SINGING-CLASS CIRCULAR

JUNE 1 1927

(FOR LIST OF CONTENTS SEE PAGE 561.)

THE QUINTESSENCE OF DELIUS

BY ROBERT H. HULL

Apart from a large number of biographical sketches, a whole book has been written about Delius. It is quite clear, therefore, that within the scope of a short article I cannot hope to treat adequately more than a single aspect of his music, and in consideration of this I have chosen for examination what may be termed the essential poetry of his art. It has been my aim to select musical examples which may be said fairly to represent this side of Delius's creative genius; further, the choice of illustration has been governed, perhaps even to the extent of limitation, by an endeavour to select from those works best known to the general musical public. Now that certain of Delius's orchestral works, at all events, are performed with moderate frequency, and are popularised to some extent through the medium of the gramophone, sectional illustrations, as given here, may be of some use even to those who are acquainted only with the better known works.

But it is necessary to define a little more accurately the exact nature of the quest. Let me say at once, then, that our present concern is with the contemplative music of Delius, since it is in that quarter that the true essentials of his art may be found. His biographers are divided in their opinions as to his merits as a writer of opera, although most are now agreed that his greatest talents do not lie in that direction. Nevertheless Mr. Philip Heseltine, for whose opinion on this subject I have the greatest respect, says :

If opera can be defined as perfect correlation between music and action, then 'A Village Romeo and Juliet' is one of the most flawless masterpieces that has ever been given to the world.

On the other hand certain biographers, with some show of justice, have contended that the writing is angular and unvocal, and that Delius has done better work in other respects. The music of the opera is certainly very beautiful, but in his rhapsodic works other than opera Delius has expressed equal beauty of thought in a form still more compact. In connection with the latter I shall illustrate instances in a subsequent paragraph.

The Variations for orchestra and chorus entitled 'Appalachia,' together with the large choral works 'Sea-Drift' and 'A Mass of Life,' magnificent as they undoubtedly are, do not lend themselves readily to quotation, and although that would be in itself an insufficient excuse for leaving them unconsidered, it is the opinion of those who are best acquainted with the works of Delius that

choral writing is not his happiest or most characteristic medium. Mr. Sydney Grew, in a charming, appreciative sketch of the composer, points out that in 'A Mass of Life' and, to a lesser extent, in 'Sea-Drift,' Delius is very apt to mistake both accent and sense:

The greatness of Delius is, I feel, transcendental; but in fine points like these he speaks with the uncertainty of a beginner.

This seems to express the general view, despite the acknowledged magnificence of the works. But it shows clearly that one must look elsewhere for the most complete and concise expression of Delius's art.

This preamble has been necessary if only to show why certain works are excluded from consideration. It is not in the operas or in the choral works that one finds a crystallisation of Delius's poetry, although it is contained to some degree in everything he has handled. 'A Song of the High Hills' typifies a 'border line' case, unevenness in construction and texture being in this instance the reason for disqualification. What, then, is left as the reward for the search?

There are five works for orchestra or small orchestra, all rather similar in character, which more than any other of his compositions are representative of Delius. This group includes 'Brigg Fair' (1907), 'In a Summer Garden' (1908), 'A Dance Rhapsody' (No. 1) (1908), 'Summer night on the River' (1911), and 'On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring' (1912). If this list had to be extended one would include 'Paris' (1899) and the Violin Concerto (1916). But Delius does not write good concertos, and the work of this class here instanced is for the most part a rhapsody for orchestra which would not entirely lose its beauty were the solo violin altogether absent. And one scarcely feels that 'Paris' contains any typical utterance which has not been repeated or improved upon in one or another of the five works which we have elected to consider.

Before proceeding to any sort of analysis it may perhaps be pointed out that a careful perusal of a considerable quantity of biographical matter by diverse authors has shown one thing definitely; that in no single instance has anyone been found to speak ill of that part of the composer's work which is purely contemplative, whatever disagreements there may have been as to the value of his excursions into other forms. By this the present selection is in some measure guided.

'Brigg Fair,' which the composer has happily described as 'an English Rhapsody,' belongs to the beginning of that period at which Delius was definitely breaking away from external influence, for the most part the influence of Grieg and Strauss. It must be admitted, however, that he has never succeeded in losing one characteristic, almost a mannerism, which he inherited from Grieg, namely, the trick of writing to excess

descending chromatic sevenths. But here again one must criticise with caution, for Delius developed and expanded his art far beyond anything that Grieg could have conceived. No one but Delius could have written the opening bars of 'Brigg Fair':

Ex. 1.
Slow—Pastoral.
Flute solo.

pp
Harp.

The tune on which the Rhapsody is built is a Lincolnshire folk-song collected by Percy Grainger, and given by him to Delius. After the delightfully pastoral introduction the tune is presented in its simplest form:

Ex. 2. *With easy movement.*

$\text{♩} = 66.$
Oboe solo.
p dolce.

This is decorated by degrees and woven into a fairly complex harmonic scheme. In that section of the work which is purely rhapsodic there is practically no movement beyond an occasional shifting of block chords by way of harmonizing the variation of the original theme. Part of the success of Delius lies in the fact that he invariably

selects an appropriate and telling chord when he does make a harmonic change.

Delius has never been very successful in his writing for brass; only too often the result has been what the composer would desire most to avoid, viz., a touch of vulgarity—sometimes even of blatancy. In the present work, the following variation, the beginning of which is here quoted, suffers from this defect. It gives a glimpse of Strauss on the doorstep, as it were:

Ex. 3. *Slow. With solemnity.* 'Brigg Fair.'

In fairness to Delius, however, I must add that it has not been my good fortune to hear a performance of 'Brigg Fair' which has not been execrably bad and an obvious misinterpretation of the composer's intentions; this work has indeed suffered much at the hands of conductors. But even when every allowance is made for inadequate rehearsal and a general lack of perception, it is clear that this variation cannot ever be quite successful.

Apart from this small grumble one has nothing but praise for the Rhapsody. Take, for instance, Delius's treatment of the folk-tune in the closing bars of the work:

Ex. 4. 'Brigg Fair.'

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With the exception, perhaps, of the apex in the Dance Rhapsody No. 1, Delius has not written a passage to surpass in beauty this conclusion to 'Brigg Fair,' even though one may find examples equal to it in that respect. This admittedly difficult work is charming enough to deserve something more than those public rehearsals of it which are styled performances.

If no quotation is made from 'In a Summer Garden' it is because in the first place it is so far built up of little fragments, though wonderfully compact as a whole, that isolated examples cannot give the clue to the complete work, as in the case of the other idylls; secondly, at the time of writing, gramophone records of this orchestral poem have not been issued, whereas three of the works we are considering have been recorded, so that it would be out of reason to expect sectional illustrations to be understood.

What, then, shall be said in respect of this intimately constructed work? To exhaust further the adjectives connected with beauty of expression may not convince, and yet of all the impressions that the listener receives, the sense of beauty is strongest. If one takes care not to look for objective impressionism as the foremost consideration, the lines of Rossetti which preface the score may be quoted as indicative of the spirit of the work:

All are my blooms and all sweet blooms of love
To thee I gave while Spring and Summer sang.

One feels that here Delius's hand is surer than in 'Brigg Fair,' though in mood the resemblance is strong. Perhaps a partial explanation may be conceived if 'In a Summer Garden' is regarded as coming from the composer without any tangible external stimulus. Be that as it may, it is a very lovely work.

The first Dance Rhapsody bears some resemblance to 'Brigg Fair' in actual form, and (as in the latter work) the main theme is preceded by a few quiet introductory bars. The theme itself is angular, and at first sight would not seem to suggest many possibilities as regards interesting harmonic treatment:

Ex. 5. *With easy dance movement.*
Oboe solo.



Dance Rhapsody No. 1.



But with this tune Delius does wonders; it is in just such circumstances that his chromatic method is most appropriate in its application. His remarkable capacity for handling the wood-wind of the orchestra is here seen to the best advantage. The theme is stated and re-stated, but always against a shifting harmonic background so that the listener's interest never wanes. (It may be well to note that the middle section is entirely satisfactory when performed under proper conditions in the concert-hall. Those who know this work only through the medium of the gramophone might be misled into thinking otherwise.)

The apex of the Rhapsody is reached in what is surely the most beautiful passage that Delius has written; we cannot hope to improve upon Mr. Heseltine's description:

The climax of the work is not dynamic, but comes at the music's ebb, a metamorphosis of the dance theme played by a solo violin against a background of divided strings, . . . perhaps the most intense and exalted moment in all Delius's work.

I quote here the opening of the passage:

Ex. 6. *Molto adagio.*

Solo Violin.



But with Mr. Heseltine one must agree that the Coda does not and cannot come off in performance. It is startling, and upsets the reflections induced by the contemplative nature of the climactic passage. Nevertheless Delius has willed otherwise, and in theory one cannot resent his conception.

Even at this stage of our quest it is becoming clear, perhaps, what is the nature of Delius's art. His music is of that character which for want of a better term is styled Romantic, an appellation admittedly unsatisfactory by reason of its classical association, but at present inevitable. Nevertheless there is in his poetry nothing of that decadence which so often fringes the borderline of the Romantic. 'The art of Delius belongs to the evening of a great period.' There is no trace of decay in his work.

In an earlier paragraph I made reference to the compactness of Delius's artistic expression when seen at its best, and my findings indicated that this crystallisation is not to be found in the operas or major choral works. There remain for consideration two idylls for small orchestra, 'On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring' and 'Summer night on the river.' It is in these pieces, the finest orchestral works that Delius has written, that this compactness is ultimately to be found. 'To anyone unacquainted with his music the "First Cuckoo" might be presented as an epitome of his whole life's work.' To select from this piece examples of the concentrated essence of Delius is no easy task on account of the richness of the material, but perhaps the following will serve as typical illustrations:

Ex. 7.

With easy flowing movement. 'On hearing the first cuckoo.'

cres. *mf* *f*

Ex. 8.

In tempo. *'On hearing the first cuckoo.'*

Very quietly. *'Summer night on the river.'*

pp

Con Ped.

Viewed in its entirety this idyll is a flawless gem; its neighbour, 'Summer night on the river,' is scarcely less so. Both are conceived in the same contemplative mood, but the texture of the latter piece is apt to suffer in the process of transcription

to terms of the pianoforte. In spite of this handicap, however, the opening bars reduced from the full score give a moderately clear idea of the characteristic charm which prevails.

What, then, is the conclusion? In the writings of an acknowledged authority on contemporary music are found both a clue to the object of the quest and an explanation of the greatness of Delius. In an earlier article, and in another connection, I made reference to 'The New Music'; in that book Dr. Dyson indicates more clearly than I could ever hope to do what should be the present verdict, and it is not necessary that I should attempt any addition to his admirable summary:

He [Delius] has at least one quality which is perhaps above all others scarce in our time; he has a deep, a quiet, and an intrinsic sense of beauty. Is it this that our generation has lost or is losing? His idylls 'On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring' and 'Summer night on the river,' and a dozen other movements of tranquil yet enchanted fantasy, were not born of the tumult of to-day. Like the idyll of 'Siegfried,' they must be tasted without passion, without impatience. Delius is not of the market-place. . . . His is often a rhapsodic art, but still more is it at times an art of pure contemplation. And an art of pure contemplation is not easy to practise in this 20th century of ours.

Ad Libitum

By 'FESTE'

Need a writer apologise for returning to Beethoven three months after the Centenary celebrations? I hope not. If Beethoven deserved even one half of the laurels that were showered on him in March, he can stand up against a good deal of discussion yet. So let us hear no more muttering of the ominous words 'slump' and 'reaction.' If we have really been bending our minds to his finest music during the celebrations, we ought to have got so much light on it and him, that the remainder of the Centenary year ought to find us more enthusiastic, not less. However, even the best of fare and the most standing of dishes may lose some of their appeal after an orgie. If so, the jaded Beethovenite can have no better pick-me-up than an attack on his idol, and luckily a first-rate tonic of the kind is available in an article by Mr. E. J. Dent in the *Musical Quarterly* for April. As the *Musical Quarterly* is an American journal, it will be seen by only a few readers on this side. I therefore make a point of discussing it here.

Mr. Dent entitles his article 'Beethoven and a Younger Generation.' No doubt there are some musicians on the wrong side of middle age—that is, the impetuous, ill-balanced side—who honestly feel bored by Beethoven; and the article probably expresses a good deal of their point of view. But as a whole the reasoning is that of a jaded historian rather than of an impatient youth; it ought to be entitled 'Beethoven and E. J. Dent.'

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The rôle of Devil's Advocate is difficult and ungrateful, and Mr. Dent carries it off with the courage and skill that we expect of him. It may be foolhardy on my part to enter the lists against such an opponent, but as nobody else seems inclined to take up the quarrel on Beethoven's behalf, I am prepared to risk coming a cropper. There is some fitness in my venture, too, for I am a long way from being a blind worshipper. More than once during the past few years I have written things about Beethoven that have brought me abusive letters—one excited reader even went so far as to threaten me with battery.

Mr. Dent begins by saying that behind all the Centenary oratory

... we shall certainly hear in private conversation a good many scattered remarks of anything but complimentary character. Some of them may even find their way into print. For a considerable time the orthodox have been receiving slight shocks at modern criticism of Beethoven. To one who watches contemporary musical life with the eye of an historian, there is nothing very surprising about the younger generation's scepticism, but it is curiously amusing to observe the horror and indignation which it provokes. Beethoven has become a religion.

Isn't the reference to the 'younger generation' too sweeping? At the recent series of performances of the Beethoven Quartets at Queen's Hall, it was a matter for comment that the large audiences contained a surprisingly big proportion of young people. Nor was the Friday evening audience at the 'Proms,' even in the most recent years, made up entirely of greybeards and baldheads. How came all these members of an Enlightened Younger Generation to be worshipping at a shrine that they ought to be breaking down? The fact is, of course, anti-Beethovenism has far less to do with age than Mr. Dent supposes. There are 'pros' in the early twenties, and 'antis' with one foot in the grave. Mr. Dent (like most of the people who matter) has himself just entered the roaring fifties, and so ought to be a crusted 'pro.' Instead, we see him with a red flag in the front rank of the opposition.

Nor is he right in his implication that courage is needed in order to say hard things about Beethoven. The most marked characteristic of to-day is the complete disappearance of the bump of reverence. So completely has it been ironed out that most of us have a hollow (a kind of bird-bath) in the place where the bump used to grow. We may be sure that nobody speaks well of Beethoven merely because it is the thing to do. This being so, one of the most striking tributes to Beethoven is the smallness of the opposition. It may be objected that appearances are deceptive, and that the opposition makes a poor show because the journalistic openings for expression are monopolised by professional critics, who naturally say the thing that they imagine the public expects and wants during a Centenary. The best answer to this is to point out that the

critical tributes as a whole have been strikingly free from undiscriminating worship. (Obviously, we must take into account only such newspaper articles as were written by musicians.) For example, Beethoven at his best can hardly be more enthusiastically acclaimed than he has lately been by Mr. Ernest Newman. Yet none of the 'antis' could be more frank concerning his weaknesses, both as man and musician. And in a greater or less degree that is the critical attitude of to-day's writers as a body. Only the 'anti' is sweeping, and can see no good in Beethoven, just as the devout of the last generation could see no weakness; and the 'anti' is simply the natural product of the blind devotee. One whole-hogger begets another. The breed is the same; the difference is in the change of direction from right to left.

There can be little doubt that Beethoven's repute gained much in the 19th century, and has lost something in the 20th, from the general belief that a profound moral purpose lies behind much of his music. How far such a purpose may be expressed in terms of music (*i.e.*, apart from any kind of text) is, as Mr. Dent says, 'a question which yet remains to be seriously and scientifically investigated.' Mr. Dent suggests cautiously that 'Beethoven may perhaps have set himself the problem' of such expression; and there can be no question that the majority of his admirers in the past were satisfied that he did so. As a result his music as a whole has been saddled with a quasi-religious import that in the eyes of the present cynical generation is a far greater drawback than an unauthorised programme of a more ordinary type. The obvious and commonsense thing to do is to dismiss all such associations, both moral and picturesque, and to judge his music on its merits. No doubt he was partly responsible for the incubus. His habit of indulging in trite moral reflections, the contemporary method of portraiture (which almost invariably represented him as a species of prophet caught in the act of taking up his parable), and his great developments on the dynamic and emotional sides of music—these three factors were enough to create an atmosphere that made it difficult for his admirers to listen to his music as pure sound, even if they wanted to do so. But almost certainly they didn't want to listen to it in that way. As Mr. Dent says,

... the 19th century witnessed a widespread collapse of orthodoxy in Christian doctrine, and at the same time a profound deepening of the fundamental religious instinct. Many people who could no longer submit whole-heartedly to the authority of a church, turned towards music as a substitute for theology.

Inevitably serious music was invested with a kind of conventional orthodoxy. What more natural than that Beethoven should be enthroned as the major prophet of the new cult? Hence, no doubt, his sacrosanct position in the past:

The music of other composers may be subjected to critical analysis: we may be allowed to find Wagner too sensual, Brahms too inhuman, Chopin too decadent, and Mozart too frivolous, but to have any doubts about Beethoven would be to risk undermining the whole foundation of art and morality. Even the learned must be careful what they say; the scientific mind only too easily oversteps the due limits of reverence.

This may have been true fifty years ago, but one cannot read (say) the concert notices in the daily and weekly press of to-day without constantly meeting some frank views concerning Beethoven's weaker works. Nobody is shocked, and the composer's reputation, so far from being damaged, is helped, because such honest and outspoken criticism is gradually teaching the general public to be as discriminating with Beethoven as they are with other great creators. Shakespeare's position, for example, was never higher or more assured than it is to-day, when the extent of his occasional failure is realised more fully than ever before.

In an article on Beethoven's 'Choral Fantasia' in the current *Music and Letters*, Mr. Dent says that this work is seldom performed, and even then rouses no enthusiasm; and he goes on to tell us that the last time he heard it, at a provincial Festival, a distinguished composer said to him, 'What a mistake to make those poor people sing the "Choral Fantasia." You must admit that it is a wretched work; that's why it's never performed.' Mr. Dent says that he refused to admit its wretchedness, and he is still disposed to champion it, if we may judge from the fact of his devoting a whole article to it. But the 'distinguished composer' was right: the Fantasia is a feeble work, and not a good word was said for it after its recent performance by the Royal Philharmonic Society.

The distinguished composer was also right when he said to Mr. Dent (after hearing it in a programme that included one of the 'Pomp and Circumstance' Marches): 'Here are these unsophisticated people hearing "Pomp and Circumstance," which is Elgar at his best, and the "Choral Fantasia," which is Beethoven at his worst, or something like it; and the result is that they go home with the impression that Elgar is a much greater composer than Beethoven—and I think that's a pity.'

Now this sort of thing has happened too often. A year or so ago 'The Mount of Olives' was sung at Queen's Hall, and many folk must have rubbed their eyes, and asked whether, after all, Beethoven was a great composer. Even more recently a famous pianist, giving a programme made up entirely of Fantasias (why, goodness only knows!), included Beethoven's rambling, superficial example in G minor, Op. 77; and again there was rubbing of eyes. More instances might be given; but two will serve. The point is that every performance of works which the consensus of critical opinion has condemned, provides a further charge of ammunition for the small minority that calls Beethoven an over-rated composer.

The clue to Mr. Dent's attitude towards Beethoven is found in his sponsoring of the 'Choral Fantasia.' Over and over again his *Musical Quarterly* article shows that he has reached the stage when listening to music is purely an historical exercise. We ought all to listen historically to some extent, of course; and Beethoven has everything to gain and nothing to lose from our ability to switch our minds back to his period, with its rise of romance, its imperfect orchestra, its absence of conducting in the modern sense, and so on. But I hope we shall never become so obsessed with the historical outlook as to arrive at the point reached by Mr. Dent, who would rather hear a bad, unfamiliar work than a good, familiar one. Is this an exaggeration? Let him speak for himself:

The historically-minded listener arrives eventually at a moment when he feels that he does not want to hear any music which he has ever heard before. So much listening to familiar music is time wasted. As soon as the Sonata begins he knows what is coming, or what is likely to come; why waste the afternoon over it when one might be gaining some entirely new experience? The only experience worth recapturing is the experience of hearing a work for the first time. There is old music and there is new music; old music is music which one has heard before, new music is music which one has not heard before.

So a thing of beauty is not, after all, a joy for ever; but only at the first time of hearing!

One almost suspects Mr. Dent of an elaborate bit of leg-pulling, but the article throughout bears every sign of serious argument, so we must take this remarkable thesis as representing his view. A little earlier he says that 'some people, when they go to a concert, take their music as a dog takes a bone.' Well! there are worse ways—Mr. Dent's, for example. My own faithful hound is always ready for his ration of hard biscuit and bone; it would be highly inconvenient if he developed a taste analogous to that of the historically-minded listener, and demanded something fresh each day. 'Same old biscuit—my curse on Mr. Spratt! With my first mouthful I know what is coming. Why waste time over it when I might be gaining a new gastronomic experience? And the bones are all pretty much alike!' The only experience worth having is the experience of tasting a new food for the first time. In fact, anything for a change—a brickbat, a cake of soap, a nugget of concrete . . .'. But no; Bonzo knows a good thing when he sees it, and so long as Mr. Spratt doesn't let him down by using sawdust instead of flour, there will be no complaint on the score of monotony. Of course, you and I need more change than Bonzo; yet it is astonishing how we come back again and again to the best things in art. I have just put on a gramophone record of the Scherzo from the fifth Symphony. How many years have passed since I first heard it! Yet the bridge-passage at the end has held its own through the years, and even at second-hand (with

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the drum part left mainly to the imagination) is anticipated and enjoyed as much as ever. Beethoven at his best—we have no time for the other part of him—has, I suppose, more moments of this kind than any other composer. I began to make a list of the very special ones (leading off with the passage in the C sharp minor Quartet Fugue where the 'cello delivers the subject augmented), but gave it up for sheer embarrassment of riches. I imagine that at least seventy-five per cent. of musicians would have the same experience. Are we all wrong? If so, let us remain wrong, rather than be right with Mr. Dent, who clearly has a very thin time of it.

We are all with him in his protest against conductors who overwork the fifth Symphony. But I think he is mistaken in his assumption that average people are attracted by the interpreter rather than by the composer. How are we to account for the crowded Beethoven nights, year after year, at the 'Proms'? The conductor was familiar, and even suffered under the disability of being English; and his readings were familiar. And why is it that so many of us still turn to our gramophone and put on Beethoven records?—and player-piano rolls of the Sonatas, not played by any special performer, but merely 'ordinary'? Yet, says Mr. Dent:

Really there is no reason why people of some musical experience should want to hear Beethoven over and over again. Beethoven died a hundred years ago . . . The strange thing is not that people are tired of Beethoven in 1927, but that they are still more or less accepting him as if he were yet alive.

Although they are tired of him? But people don't spend time and money on things of which they are tired.

Mr. Dent has some interesting things to say concerning the Mozart revival, and in fact about revivals generally. No doubt he is right in his explanation of the undoubted fact that many of us are in revolt against 19th century music, and yet take great pleasure in that of the 18th, and even of an earlier period. We see the same preferences in literature; and, as Mr. Dent says, 'it is the most natural thing in the world for a grown-up son to quarrel with his parents and make friends with his grandparents.' This, however, is no proof that the son is wise, or the parents undesirable. Such friendly or unfriendly relationships are temperamental, as Mr. Dent admits. As in family life, so in music:

But if we have had a historical training we ought to be able to lay these [temperamental dislikes] aside and survey music with more serenity. We need not deny our temperaments. But we shall enjoy Bach and Mozart with intense and at the same time calm intellectual appreciation [although we've heard all their music before?], and we shall understand and enjoy other music of the distant past . . . and we shall apply the same to later composers. . . . They are all dead, they all belong to the past, they are all beyond love or hatred. They have become like the statues of wrestlers in a museum; the living men are the living wrestlers with whom we have to wrestle ourselves, as Jacob did with the angel.

The statues include practically everybody who was anybody among composers, from Dufay to Debussy, with one conspicuous exception:

But Beethoven? He refuses to fit into our categories, he refuses to settle down comfortably into a chapter of musical history, just as he refused to behave properly in polite society. Is he dead? Is he dying? Will he make a satisfactory statue for our gallery, like Mozart, Chopin, and the rest? All these people have to pass through a more or less uncomfortable period of corpsehood. There comes a moment when they really have to be put away. Beethoven has been remarkably well embalmed, but after a hundred years of lying-in-state one begins to notice that he is not so fresh as he might be. It is very regrettable, but it can't be helped.

It would be interesting to know at what point in their corpsehood the illustrious ones lose their freshness to such a degree that there is nothing left for it but to brick them up. But even then you can't count on having done with them. Old Sebastian, for example, was a failure as a corpse. They put him away at once, without waiting to see how long he would remain fresh; and they made so thorough a job of the burying that they forgot to take care of either his works or his widow. Then, a hundred years later, he was disinterred, and became not a statue but a living wrestler with whom a new generation of musicians, headed by Mendelssohn and Schumann, wrestled, as Jacob did with the angel—and not in vain. That disinterment took place a century ago, and more musicians than ever, from great performers down to village chorists, are still wrestling with the man who was dead, who belongs to the past, and who is beyond all love or hatred! Had Bach ever so many devotees as to-day? And is their devotion nothing more than 'calm, intellectual appreciation'?

The case of Bach is repeated in a greater or less degree with all the other alleged corpses. No screws will keep them down. Even so small a man as Boccherini must come pushing his way out with a Minuet and one or two other trifles; and he is allowed to remain above ground on the strength of them. (You will have noticed the 'calm, intellectual appreciation' with which the many-headed encore his Minuet.)

Mr. Dent, as we have seen, divides music into the old, which he has heard before, and the new, which he has not heard before. I prefer to adapt his mortuary figure, and divide it into dead and living. Living music is that which we still want to hear; the dead is the other sort. And the question of date is not a factor. There are some much-trumpeted works of to-day, for example, which died almost before the composer had ceased bowing to his admirers at the first performance. Even the composer's name matters little. The best of Strungk is far more alive than the worst of Bach; and the unknown tone-poet who wrote the tune of 'The trees they are so high' left something more vital than a score of the weaker songs of Schubert.

I wish space allowed me to discuss fully all the points raised in Mr. Dent's article. It must suffice to give a few brief extracts, followed by mere outlines of reply:

If Beethoven could be transferred once and for all into the department of quaint old things, the younger generation would be much more kindly disposed towards him. But Beethoven has become too much of a religion, and therefore too much of a vested interest. The directors and shareholders of Beethoven Unlimited are not going to let their stock collapse as long as expert prospectus-writing can keep up its credit. Hence the high-minded air of indignation which greets any honest criticism of the idol; the pious congregation is indeed shocked and grieved.

Why all this emphasis on 'the younger generation'? Those of us past the flush of youth still count for something, surely. And Mr. Dent too lightly assumes that he has the juniors solidly at his back, whereas I suppose there is not one of us who does not number among his circle some young Beethoven enthusiasts. And why should we oldsters be anxious to keep up the Beethoven stock unless we find his music still very much alive? If it retains its value for us, we should be fools to drop it; when its value goes, we shall scrap it readily enough.

It is Beethoven, I fear, who stands perpetually in the way of my understanding modern music; it is Beethoven who perpetually hinders me from achieving a really sympathetic and intelligent contact with younger minds. . . . I am not 'tired of Beethoven' because I was saturated with Beethoven from five to twenty-five and beyond; but I do not much want to hear any of his works again. I may now and then be interested to hear something of Beethoven in order to study the impression which he makes on someone else in whom I may happen to be interested, either as a performer or as a pupil; but for myself alone, Beethoven belongs to the experience of my past life. It is an experience which I absorbed long ago, and I can never renew it. It is contemporary music that I want to hear now.

Mr. Dent apologises for the autobiographical nature of such passages as the above, and adds that they are written because he imagines there are hundreds of musicians in exactly the same case. There may be; but if so, what of it? There are hundreds of good musicians who have no liking for this or that great composer, ancient or modern. But they do not therefore assume that the composers in question have had their day, and have reached the putrefying stage.

Concerning the proportion of Beethoven's output that is still in the current repertory, Mr. Dent is right: the amount is small. But is the fault in the music? The answer is supplied unintentionally by Mr. Dent himself:

In the concert-room one may hear the 'Waldstein,' the 'Appassionata,' and occasionally Op. 106 and Op. 111.

If this be so—it is, I think, a slight exaggeration—the blame lies with our sheep-like recitalists. And it is pretty certain that to a considerable extent the other sections of Beethoven's output suffer in the same way.

But even if we admit that the Symphonies, Overtures, String Quartets, and other works mentioned by Mr. Dent represent all that is vital to-day, they constitute a collection of masterpieces that in bulk and quality more than equal the frequently performed music of some other composers, for whom Mr. Dent's young friends profess warm admiration. Does their idol Mozart, for example, play a bigger part in the concert repertory?

Here I really must stop, though I am bursting to comment on Mr. Dent's very suggestive passages concerning the visionary side of Beethoven, his technical imperfections, and his impressionism.

It remains only to express a hope that Mr. Dent's bold declaration of un-faith will have a bracing effect on any readers who happen to be suffering from an overdose of the Centenary. For my part, if I had needed anything to convince me that Beethoven is still very much alive, it would have been amply supplied by the picture we have just been surveying of the Cambridge Professor trying to lay out Ludwig's protesting corpse. ('Whoa! . . . Ah! Would you? Sit on his head, Holbrooke; collar his feet, Dulac; I've got his arms tight. . . .')

NEW LIGHT ON LATE TUDOR COMPOSERS

By W. H. GRATTAN FLOOD

XXV.—JOHN DOWLAND

John Dowland, Prince of Lutenist-Composers, and a virtuoso of European reputation, has had tardy recognition, but has at last come into his own, thanks to the efforts of Sir Henry Hadow, Dr. Fellowes, Mr. Philip Heseltine ('Peter Warlock'), and other Tudor enthusiasts. However, his biography has not yet been published in any detail, although the interested reader will find good sketches in the new edition of 'Grove' (1927), from the pen of the late William Barclay Squire; in 'English Madrigal Composers' (1921), by Dr. Fellowes; and in 'The English Ayre' (1926), by Peter Warlock—both the latter being published by the Oxford University Press.

Dowland was an Irishman, and was born near Dublin, in January, 1563, of the O'Dolan family of co. Leitrim, whose patronymic is variously written as Dolan, Dowlan, and Dowland. His father, who was closely related to the Forsters, Balls, Smiths, and other Dublin families, was disfranchised, as being a Roman Catholic, in 1576, and died in 1578. As a boy of fifteen young Dowland went to London, and was taken into the service of Sir Henry Cobham, conforming to the new religion. Displaying uncommon musical powers, he accompanied Cobham, who was appointed English Ambassador, in October, 1579, to Paris, and remained in his service till October, 1583, by which date Dowland had become a Catholic. He was retained in the service of Sir Edward Stafford, Cobham's successor as Ambassador in October, 1583, and travelled through France in the early

part of the year 1584. He returned to London at the close of the same year, and became household musician to Sir George Carey, subsequently Lord Hunsdon.

Early in 1585 Dowland married; and his eldest son, Robert (called after his godfather, Sir Robert Sidney), was born in 1586. Dowland's famous Galliard was popular in 1588, in which year he graduated Mus.B. of Oxford. In 1590, he furnished the music for Peele's 'Polyhymnia,' performed at Court, this being followed by his lovely 'Lachrimæ,' or 'Flow, my tears.' Among his friends in 1591 was Thomas Campion, also an Irishman, 'son and heir of John Campion of Dublin,' who wrote two Latin epigrams for him.

Disappointed at not getting a Court appointment (vacant by the death of John Johnson, lutenist), Dowland went to the Continent in the winter of the year 1595, and spent some months at Cassel, where he was feted by the Duke of Brunswick. For about two years he travelled in France, Germany, and Italy, and enjoyed the friendship of Luca Marenzio, with whom he foregathered at Rome, subsequently visiting Bologna, Venice, and Florence. Dowland's 'Book of Ayres' (1597) had a wonderful vogue, giving to the world a new art-form, and Cambridge gave him the degree of Mus.B. *ad eundem*. In November, 1598, he was appointed lutenist to the Danish Court, at a salary of 500 dalers a year; and in 1600 appeared his 'Songs or Ayres for the Lute.' In the summer of 1601 he came to England, and took back with him to Elsinore an Irish harper, Cahir O'Reilly, and an English dancer, Henry Sandham. His 'Third and Last Book of Songs or Aires' (dedicated to Sir John Souch) was published in 1603, in which year he paid a visit to England.

Early in 1605, Dowland was given an extended holiday to visit his boyhood's friends in Ireland, and was duly honoured by Dublin University. The proof of his stay as a graduate in Trinity College, Dublin, in the summer of 1605, is to be found in 'The Particular Book of Trinity College, Dublin,' edited by the late Provost, the Rev. Sir John P. Mahaffy, Mus.D. (London, 1904), from which it appears (p. 236) that Dowland had 'commons' in the College for nine weeks, he having come over during the Provostship of Henry Alvey (1601-09), who returned to Dublin on June 15, 1605. Doubtless 'Sir Douland,' as he is called, had been recommended by Sir Robert Cecil (who was then Chancellor of Dublin University) for the grace of incorporation as Mus.D., and this recommendation was duly carried out by Alvey as Vice-Chancellor. Dowland was thus the first musical graduate of Trinity College, Dublin (1605).

While sojourning at Dublin, Dowland renewed acquaintance with relatives and old friends—the Balls, Smiths, Forsters, Ushers, &c. From the Forster papers we learn that Dowland composed pieces for John Forster and 'Sir' Smith. Of course, it is well-known that he dedicated his 'Pilgrim's Solace' (1612)

To my loving countryman, Mr. John Forster the younger, merchant of Dublin, in Ireland,

—ample proof of his being an Irishman; but it is only recently that we found corroboration of his having composed a piece for Thomas Smith (Fellow, Trin. Col. Dub., in 1610). At the sale of a few MSS. of Dowland's at Sotheby's (November 18, 1926), one of the airs was given as 'Mr. Smith's Allemand.'

In 1605, Dowland published his 'Lachrimæ, or Seven Teares, figured in seven passionate Pavans, with divers other pavans, galliards, and almands,' dedicated to Queen Anne. One of these Galliards was adapted from the madrigal, 'If my complaints could passions move.' Early in the following year, Dowland was dismissed from the Danish Court (February 24, 1606), and settled in London. He did not, however, receive the encouragement due to his talents, and in 1609 we find him as lutenist to Lord Walden, son of the Earl of Suffolk, at Audley End. He contributed some prefatory verses to Richard Alison's 'An Hour's Recreation in Musicke' (1606), a circumstance that lends weight to the belief that he also wrote the words of most of his own madrigals. Three years later he translated the 'Micrologus' of Andreas Ornithoparcus (originally published at Leipsic in 1517), dedicated to Sir Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury.

Although his studied neglect by English friends is pointedly referred to by Peacham, in his 'Minerva Britannica' (1612), yet at last, in September, 1612, he was appointed Court Lutenist at '20*l.* a day for wages, and £16 2s. 6*d.* for livery.' Some commendatory verses by Dowland are prefixed to Ravenscroft's 'Brief Discourse,' in 1614, and in the same year he contributed a few compositions to Sir William Leighton's 'Teares.'

From 1615 till his death, scant details are available regarding Dowland. However, in 1622 and 1623 his son, Robert, was in the service of Philip Julius, Duke of Wolgast, in Pomerania (Saxony), and on August 30 of the latter year was permitted to return to England, in company with Richard Jones, an English actor in the Duke's service (Chambers, 'Elizabethan Stage,' ii., 288). It is said that he returned to the Roman Catholic faith in 1624, though he retained, like Byrd, his Court appointment. His death occurred on January 21, 1625, and it is remarkable that neither the place of his death nor burial has come down, a fact that favours the belief in Dowland's conversion to the tenets in which he was brought up at Dublin.

Dowland, in his 'Pilgrim's Solace,' showed a distinct advance on the late Tudor composers, and he startled the musicians of his day by the chromatic treatment of his harmonies. Among his songs, 'From Silent Night' may be regarded, as Dr. Fellowes writes, as 'one of the marvels of the Elizabethan age,' and in 'All ye whom love or fortune' Dowland employed 'still more elaborate chromatic development, with some surprisingly modern features.' Probably one of his best songs is 'I saw my lady weep.' Not only was he an incomparable songwriter and singer, but he was justly regarded as the greatest lutenist in Europe. Ireland may well be proud of this remarkable Tudor composer, in whose praise his countryman, Campion, wrote the following epigram:

Famam posteritas quam dedit Orpheo,
Dolandi, melius Musica dat tibi;
Fugaces reprimens archetypis sonos;
Quas et delicias praebuit auribus,
Ipsius conspicuas luminibus facit.

Peter Warlock ('The English Ayre,' 1926) says that

... though Byrd and others of his contemporaries excelled in larger forms of composition, no one has left us a musical legacy of more intrinsic loveliness than John Dowland.

FACSIMILE LETTERS, NO. 5.

From Ignaz Moscheles to Mr. Bruaud, representative of Messrs. Erard in London, May 13, 1845.

Mon cher M. Bruaud

Je m'assure le plaisir de jouer vos deux pianos à mes deux dernières matinées destinées aux illustrations de Beethoven. Je vous envoie par conséquent les plus brillantes

Je vous avoue d'avance pour savoir si vous me consentez de jouer mon vieux piano ou si vous voulez bien me préparer un nouveau. Je vous envoie également l'assurance de mon estime

I. Moscheles
13 Mai 1845

[Translation.]

MY DEAR MR. BRUAUD,

I propose the pleasure of playing your fine pianoforte at my last two matinées, devoted to illustrations of Beethoven, and consequently the most brilliant. I give you this notice in advance to know whether you advise me to play on my old pianoforte or whether you would prefer to prepare for me a new one. Please accept the assurance of my esteem.

May 13, 1845.

I. MOSCHELES.

VIVALDI AND STRADELLA:
A RECENT DISCOVERY

BY ALBERTO GENTILI

In 1743 there died at Venice Antonio Vivaldi, the so-called 'red priest,' who had won fame among connoisseurs and the general public as a composer of sacred and secular music, including operas, as well as being a violinist of outstanding ability.

In truth, the executant was more notorious than the composer, and after his death this fact tended to the depreciation of his writings. Soon, indeed, all trace was lost of twenty-six out of his twenty-eight operas, of all his sacred music, and of the greater part of his instrumental works, so that criticism came to be concentrated almost exclusively on his Violin Concertos,* and historians have been inclined to see in him a mere virtuoso-composer. More recently, however, two little collections of Concertos, found in MS. in the Dresden Library, proved that this attitude needed modifying.

That it must be radically altered is shown by the fourteen volumes of Vivaldi MSS. which form part of a remarkable collection recently acquired by Dr. Roberto Foà, and presented by him to the Turin National Library, where it is now in the safe care of Prof. Luigi Torri, and of the Marchese Dr. Faustino Curlo.

Eleven theatre works—some hitherto entirely unknown, others known only by name—a volume of sacred music, and others of cantatas and concertos, provide material that sets Vivaldi the composer on at least the level of the virtuoso.

In the Concertos themselves, alongside pages that undeniably tend to display those resources of technique which Vivaldi had done much to develop, we find others wherein music reigns in her own right. In particular there are certain Adagios of an intensity and purity of line, of an harmonic novelty and a constructive solidity, wholly worthy of J. S. Bach.

Together with numerous Concertos for violin we discover admirable examples for other combinations—e.g., for violoncello, oboe, bassoon, and viola d'amore—and here Vivaldi appears in a new light, as a true pathfinder. Nor is this all. These volumes contain concertos for several soloists, and the combinations are varied and original. Among others, we note one for violin, oboe, and organ, and another for violin and oboe, always with orchestral accompaniment. And in the constitution of the orchestra there is much that is unconventional.

Among the unknown or lost operas which I have now been able to identify in these MSS., a special importance attaches to 'L'Olimpiade,' in so far as, performed a year before Pergolesi's opera of the same name (both were composed on the same libretto by Metastasio), it affords material for an instructive comparison. And Vivaldi's superiority declares itself irrefutably. Far different from the other's is his dramatic instinct. His musical impulse never fails to take into account the nature of the situations; and if in its general lines his form does not depart from the conventions of his day, there are any number of original details whereby Vivaldi breaks with the usual procedure for the sake of dramatic vividness. Thus we come across arias that grow in the freest shapes, and in these occur astounding harmonic audacities.

* Cf. Grove. 'The publications on which his fame rests are all works in which the violin takes the principal part.'

Happily, in the operas we now possess, various stages in Vivaldi's activities are represented. Among those of which we have the dates, two belong to his early maturity (1716-18) and three to his latter years.

How it came about that almost all Vivaldi's compositions suddenly disappeared after his death, and how such a mass of them lay for two centuries forgotten in a private library, is a mystery difficult to explain. We risk the guess that the first collector was at Venice at the time of Vivaldi's death and acquired the MSS. in one lot from the family. This would explain why the greater part of them are autographs.

Numbers of false starts, revisions, and second thoughts give us glimpses of the musician in the act of creation, and then again the racing penmanship of many pages testifies to his fiery, improvising way of work, confirming the statement of his friend, De Brosse:

The old man composes like wildfire. I have heard him boast of being able to compose a concerto, complete in all parts, in less time than it takes a copyist to write it out.

The newly-discovered music will, I hope, be an incentive to the better study of the Venetian school of the early 18th century, hitherto so much neglected and ill judged. Among the numerous Venetian musicians of the time, Vivaldi's figure will stand forth larger than before, and with the proper study of his work the fame that was his in life will be renewed.

Another composer of importance who figures in the collection is Alessandro Stradella, who in his lifetime had a certain connection with Turin, in the course of a tragic adventure of his in 1677. In the Royal Archives at Turin there is a MS., containing records of the reign of Marie de Nemours, Dowager Duchess of Savoy, which tells the tale in detail.

Stradella, having eloped with the mistress of the Venetian Senator Alvise Contarini, fled with her from Venice and took refuge at Turin. He was pursued by two bravoes who were in Contarini's service, was waylaid, and fell under five sword-wounds. The bravoes thereupon sought protection from the French Ambassador, who, despite the Regent, conducted them in safety in his own carriage to Pineolo.

Stradella recovered from his wounds, and was soon able to seek a change of air. In 1678 we find him at Genoa, where in the same year was composed and performed his opera 'La Forza dell' Amor Paterno.' To-day that opera, after two and half centuries, has reappeared and is in our hands. Hitherto there have actually been doubts of its very existence.

True, Burney in his 'History' (1789) mentions his possession of a copy of the libretto, adding that it was dated Genoa, 1678, and was dedicated, apparently in Stradella's handwriting, to the Signora Teresa Raggi Paoli.

But when, in 1865, Catelani was writing his study of Stradella's operas, he confessed:

As for 'La Forza dell' Amor Paterno,' I know not what to say. Burney asserted he had seen and possessed the libretto. He is alone in this good

fortune. For my part I have pursued inquiries over land and sea, but in a thousand catalogues no trace have I found of the libretto, of the opera itself, or even of its having been performed.

In 1906, however, Heinz Hess in his accurate and useful little work on Stradella, brought forward as proof at least of the performance of the opera the fact of its having been mentioned in the biographical notes on the Regio Teatro del Falcone at Genoa, by Sebastiano Vallebona, and in two other MSS. But it may be pointed out that both Vallebona, who wrote in 1877, and one of the MSS. (undated), may have derived directly or indirectly from Burney, while the other MS. does not mention Stradella's name.

My satisfaction, then, may be imagined in recognising in the Foà collection the whole of the opera, 'La Forza dell' Amor Paterno,' and in being able to establish it as the original score, from Stradella's own hand.

My considered opinion is that this opera must be regarded not only as its author's masterpiece, but also as one of the most precious gems in the vast operatic output of the 17th century.

The artist has here created with so free an impulse that he often hits on forms and modes of expression that are not to be found again for a century or more. He is here, above all, a songful composer—singing with all his soul, like the true Italian he was. An unfailing jet of fresh melody springs spontaneously for his own delight and for ours. He is here, too, the sensitive artist who lives over again the lives of his characters, and hence causes them to live on for us with vivid and unforgettable traits.

His happy and unforced creativeness commands a flow of feeling and of images, resulting in a form that is ever new, because it is adherent and adequate to the action and the personages.

A simple melody-line with a bass suffices him for his rendering of life, such are the variety and truth of the inflections, the richness of the melodic curves, his happy harmonic finds (clearly indicated in the two parts), and, finally, his consummate mastery of all the technical possibilities of the human voice. This applies both to the arias and the recitatives, for in the latter Stradella is nearly always melodious, as well as characterising his personages with masterly art and a nervous, incisive energy all his own.

The depth of feeling in some of the pages of 'La Forza dell' Amor Paterno,' the truth of the expression and sincerity of accent, set one thinking of the circumstances of the musician's life. Such are the pages in which he speaks of death, its inevitability and imminence. Did he divine that the offended senator's revenge would not stop short at the assault at Turin? Did he foresee the sequel, the murderous attack which only four years later was, in fact, to end his days?

(Translated by R. C.)

THE AMATEUR STRING QUARTET BY JAMES BROWN

I.

My first advice to all young string quartet players is that they should enter the string quartet class at the nearest and next forthcoming Musical Competition Festival. Waste no time in debating the question whether the team is or is not up to exhibition standard. Probably it isn't, but that is

not the important issue. The trouble with nearly all junior string quartet groups is that they do not quite clearly understand what they are trying to do. No doubt they instinctively feel that the impulse which has brought them together is a deep and right one, but beyond that the whole adventure is apt to look like a tangle of indistinct and unco-ordinated motives, and is liable to discouragement. What the youngsters need at this early stage is a guide, philosopher, and friend: a guide to tell them how to start and what to aim at while they are at work; a philosopher to disentangle the motives and arrange them into intelligible categories—as social, technical, artistic, spiritual, &c.; and a friend to encourage and warn them. At the Musical Festival all these will be found combined in the person of the adjudicator, whose written and spoken remarks will duly tell each string quartet group just how it stands, and what to do next for the best. At the Festival, also, the team will meet and compare with other teams, some better and some worse than itself, but all instructive either as examples for emulation or as exhibitors of faults to avoid. Merely to listen to a youthful (= immature, not quite perfect) performance of a work of which we already know every note by heart is a valuable bit of musical training. We begin by criticising other teams and other individual players, and then naturally we go on to criticising the playing of our own team both as a group and individually. Then there is the need for sticking together, for constant and frequent rehearsal, for intensive study, down to the smallest detail, of a particular 'test' work which we know must be ready for performance on a certain date. Putting all these things together, we begin to see the potential value of the Musical Festival as a means of bringing some sort of order and quality into the amateur string quartet playing of the coming generation.

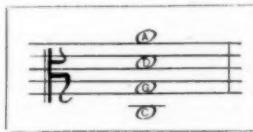
There is no need to pretend that, up to the present, with regard either to the volume of string quartet activity or to the standard of performance, anything very startling has happened. It is as a beginning and as a significant possibility that the movement is so intensely interesting. To me it looks like a revival, side by side with professional developments, of the original idea of chamber music as a domestic art for amateurs, and I venture to suggest that we older musicians should (at least provisionally) take the movement, such as it is and just as it is, quite seriously, and do all we can to help it along. My own object, in this and succeeding articles, is to supply a little simple and practical advice to those engaged in this incipient movement towards a renaissance of amateur string quartet playing. Mature and expert readers of the *Musical Times* would greatly assist this object by kindly passing these remarks on to those for whom they are more definitely intended. I would like to feel that I am speaking intimately and personally to every aspirant amateur quartet player in the English-speaking world. Indeed, my ambition goes even farther than that. I would like to feel that I am now speaking to every young string player who would like to join a string quartet.

Let us begin at this point. In any considerable neighbourhood—and there are thousands of 'considerable neighbourhoods' in our musical world—a fair number (say fifty, or a hundred) of young people are learning to play on bowed instruments. Cut out the youngest boys and girls (I am not proposing string quartets for infants); cut out also all

lazy pupils ; cut out all those who prefer to play *solo* or in a band ; in fact, cut out nearly everybody, leaving only four very musical, very keen, and rather brainy young persons who really would like to play in a string quartet. Fortunately, one of the four plays the 'cello ; unfortunately, the other three all play the violin. Of course, they know that you can't make a string quartet out of three fiddles and a bass ; so, as there is no one who plays the viola, they may be disposed to feel that the idea of forming a string quartet must be given up.

Now this is where I offer my first simple and practical hint. Why does not one of the violinists take up the viola ? It cannot be through ignorance, for every violinist, nowadays, knows that the technique, or handling, of the viola is practically the same as that of the violin, and that the only condition which presents any difficulty at all is the learning of a new clef. I think that, probably, the sole reason why one of the violinists does not switch on to the viola is because he does not know how very easy it is to do so. A trifling inconvenience is felt at first, owing to the larger stretch, and to the fact that all the left-hand fingers have to be spread out a very little more widely in order to obtain perfect intonation. But this feeling wears off in about five minutes, and thus we have triumphantly demonstrated the first great truth about the viola, which is that, so far as fingering and bowing are concerned, any violinist is already, without further practice, a ready-trained violist.

There remains only the question of the clef. This cannot be mastered in five minutes ; but it can be mastered in fourteen days. Make two enlarged copies of the diagram :



This device is known to a select circle of admirers as 'Brown's Celebrated Tutor for the Viola,' whose author proudly boasts that by this means alone, without any other tuitional material whatever, hundreds of mere violinists have been converted into happy violists. Place one copy of the 'Tutor' on the wall of your bedroom, where you can gaze on it night and morning, and the other on a desk in the room where you practise. Learn the open strings by plucking them guitar-fashion and naming them, looking at the diagram the while, and deliberately forgetting the treble clef. (Don't forget this curious act of mental oblivion—it is important.) Further developments take place on the principle that if we know any given address we can always find the house next door. And so, after about a fortnight's reasonably-painful study, our new violist is ready, another string quartet is born to the world, and the rehearsals can begin.

As to which of the three should step forward as a volunteer violist, I hope it will be the one who possesses the largest and heaviest physique and the longest hands and arms. Players who are a bit hard and rough on the violin often turn out to be fine and delicate violists. All the same, I would not insist too urgently upon this bodily aspect of the matter, having met several quite good viola players

who were constructed on a comparatively small scale. Mental requirements must also be considered. The born violist loves harmony and sonority, and delights in giving a richness of tone to the tenor, or third part, in a four-note chord. All other musical qualities, of course, he must cherish in common with the other members of the quartet, but this particular need for resonance, especially on the bottom pair of strings, is in a sense peculiar to the viola, because the size and calibre of the instrument itself are insufficient in relation to its compass, and also in comparison with the other two instruments ; therefore the natural deficit thus created must be made up by the player.

While on this subject of individual character and quality, we may as well deal similarly with the rest of the quartet.

The viola, as I have shown, must be rich and sonorous. Very nearly the same requires to be said of the second violin, for he too is playing on a smaller instrument—not absolutely, but in relation to his average *tessitura* (= range of pitch)—than either the first violin or the 'cello. In the majority of the amateur quartets which I have heard, the second violin is the one who has the smallest command of tone-fulness. Really, he should have *more* of this quality than even the first violin, who can always be heard without effort, because, unfortunately, nearly everybody automatically hears the 'tune,' or top part, while only cultivated listeners ever hear the second part at all, except when it breaks out into an unwanted tunefulness.

From the 'cello we demand solidity and firm decision on the beat. He is, most of the time, the basis and foundation of the harmonic structure, and if he is lacking in substance, or is an instant late (or early), the whole thing goes to pieces. With regard to the first violin I can here only indicate, and hope to treat more fully later on, a certain special quality which seems to me to be the essence of the matter. Negatively it can be expressed by such phrases as 'don't press,' 'don't squeeze,' 'don't dominate, or domineer, or dictate' ; but I like to avoid negative statements if possible, and in this case would prefer to say that the really good first violin in a quartet always *mixes in* with the rest of the players, that he is always 'in value' (as the painters say), and that he provides the apex of the pyramid of sound which is produced on each chord by the quartet as a whole. Think of the chord as a pyramid, really made up of four layers of equal thickness, but so beautifully made that when the layers are put together the sides are so smooth and well fitted that you see the resultant mass as one and indivisible.

(To be continued.)

THE PIANOFORTE COMPOSITIONS OF CÉSAR FRANCK

By ALFRED CORTÔT

(Authorised Translation by Fred Rothwell)

II

(Continued from May number, p. 418.)

If we attempt to determine the causes of Franck's tardy return to the pianoforte, we shall find an intention, alike artistic and moral, somewhat analogous to that which, forty years previously, and by an inverse process, had occasioned its abandonment.

Vincent d'Indy, a privileged witness of the latter part of the Master's life, tells us that in the spring of 1884 Franck informed his pupils of his desire to contribute important and serious works to pianoforte literature, which had become unproductive beneath the avalanche of fantasies and the plethora of concertos which, from a musical point of view, obstructed the first half of the 19th century. Here d'Indy is speaking, and we see nothing in this wholly personal affirmation (any more than in a later commentary on romanticism and the artistic value of its influence) which would lead us to suppose that Franck expressed himself in such terms.

The first half of the 19th century includes the interval between Beethoven's last Sonatas and the early works of Brahms, and comprises also those of Weber, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt. Have we not here a number of masterpieces sufficient to make us doubt whether d'Indy correctly represents Franck's view? We are fully aware that d'Indy, in his eagerness to extol the nobility of thought and beauty of form seen in the work of his master, mentally contrasts them with the vulgarity of those deplorable lucubrations whose influence upon public taste we have already denounced. We have also stated that it was to evade their humiliating contagion that Franck, both as interpreter and as composer, gave up his career as a pianist. In our opinion, however, d'Indy exaggerates in saying that 'No Master had contributed new material to the Beethovenian monument,' and that, 'while the technique and the art of the pianoforte had become transcendent, the music intended for it had degenerated'; and he goes too far by including in one common reprobation, and with a sort of tacit consent on the part of Franck, the Masters whose example the latter only aims at continuing and the amusers of *salons* and boarding-houses.

Did not Mendelssohn, the true and proud artist whose parentage unfortunately condemned him irredeemably in the eyes of d'Indy, take a more energetic and open part than Franck himself in combating the dealers in sound who dishonoured the music of his time? And should we not find in the very title of the 'Variations sérieuses,' or in the feeling which suffuses the noble Fugue in E minor (written by the bedside of a dying friend), the token of a moral and aesthetic programme worthy of the Master of Sainte-Clotilde?

Did not Schumann, both in his music and in his writings, fight the good fight against the Philistines with a sufficient degree of passion? And did not Liszt also, to a large extent—the Liszt of the Sonata, of the 'Méditations poétiques et religieuses,' of the Légendes, and more particularly of the admirable Variations on 'Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen' (which, both in the singular analogy of theme and in the general tone of composition suggest the no less admirable 'Prélude, Choral, et Fugue')—mark out to a considerable extent the path which César Franck was about to tread?

We can follow d'Indy with more satisfaction when, dealing with a period nearer to our own, he attributes his master's returning interest in the pianoforte to his desire that it should benefit by the splendid development of musical activity aroused in France, immediately after the Franco-German war, by the creation of the National Musical Society. We see clearly that when Franck undertakes to write the four pieces which are the object of these observations, he does this not so much to react against the

would-be disastrous tendencies at the beginning of the century—indeed, it is difficult to imagine Franck writing music *against* anything—as to assert the importance of an instrument unjustly neglected or decried at the very period with which we are dealing. The new-born Wagnerian influence, the revelation of programme music, the infatuation for legendary or picturesque formulas, and perhaps (in the glaring light of political events) the secret and salutary ambition to equal France's recent conquerors in their own artistic domain—all this impelled an entire generation of French composers towards orchestral or dramatic realisations, to the detriment of manifestations that were less conspicuous, though no less important to the healthy musical life of the country.

The example of a César Franck, whose moral influence was already being exercised outside the confines of the *échancelle*, could not therefore fail to be interpreted—at all events by his disciples—as a sort of profession of faith, an advocacy in favour of a musical expression that was curiously alien to the tendencies of the moment. And from 1886 onwards we find the best of his pupils, d'Indy himself, authoritatively seconding the intentions of his master by writing the 'Symphonie sur un thème montagnard,' where the pianoforte is invested with so much poetic dignity. Indeed, d'Indy forgets himself in attributing to Franck alone the merits of an initiation which proved to be so fruitful in its results. He forgets his own 'Poème des Montagnes,' written in 1881, and the noble Concerto of Alexis de Castillon, which, when first heard, in 1872, so violently clashed with the habits of the dilettante public (their ears still humming with the *tol-de-rol* platitudes of the Second Empire), that Saint-Saëns, who first played the Concerto, was hissed off the platform before reaching the end.

And he forgets others who were then striving after the same ends in France: Saint-Saëns, who was splendidly active at this stage of our musical history, and who, ever since 1858, had enriched the pianistic répertoire with several Concertos, the least successful of which, even at the present time, are gratefully applauded by musicians—and not by pianists alone; Lalo, who gave dramatic inspiration to an unjustly neglected Concerto; Fauré, then the young Gabriel Fauré whose fine and delightful Ballade was finished in 1880; and Chabrier, who, in the restraint of his work, bears in germ the whole immediate future of the picturesque music of our land.

There was also one other, who was known only to a few, and whose influence over Franck should not be forgotten: Charles-Valentin Alkan, an organist by profession, and one whose compositions were partly detestable, partly works of genius. His pianoforte music (of which Franck was very fond) at its best was not unrelated in style to certain passages of 'Les Djinns,' with which the composer of the 'Béatitudes' was to inaugurate his new pianoforte series.*

We shall be misunderstood if the foregoing remarks are regarded as an attempt to diminish the historic importance of Franck's return to pianoforte music or to lessen its influence upon the tendencies of the composers who followed him.

* It is interesting to note the series of pianoforte pieces by Alkan transcribed for the organ by Franck in 1889. They also testify to a strange concordance of sentiment with the productions of the transcriber himself.

Our aim simply is to prove that his desires and intentions were shared by some—and these not the least important—of his contemporaries.

It is with 'Les Djinns' that Franck, in 1883—not in 1884, as stated by a number of commentators—resumes contact with the pianoforte.

The sub-title 'symphonic poem,' added by Franck to his first work for pianoforte and orchestra (he affirmed that no attention must be paid to his previous compositions of the same nature), might lead us to infer that he has in view a commentary on Hugo's poem bearing the same title. We should be inclined to regard it rather as a sort of free interpretation of the legendary character attributed to the Djinns in Oriental fables, occasionally applied to the logic of musical development.

Hugo's famous poem admits of a rhythmic principle that has some affinity to the plan of Franck's composition. Both versions—musical and verbal—rely upon a progressive expansion of the cadence, to which corresponds a parallel increase of intensity of expression. Then, once a maximum point is reached (shown by the release of longer periods) we have, in both words and music, the exhibition of a strictly inverse mechanism gradually culminating in the total dying away both of notes and of text.

The impression, however, given by the music is of a distinctly emotional order, whereas the words, somewhat handicapped by the arbitrary setting imposed on them by Hugo's fancy, aim only at description, at literary virtuosity.

On the other hand, what the 'Thousand and One Nights' tells us of the Djinns is that they are familiar spirits, midway between angel and demon, some of them benevolent to mankind—protectors of the virtuous and the wise, good servants of Islam—whereas the rest are malevolent, tormenting genii, in addition to being unbelievers. A mere amplification, a slight dramatic note, linked on to the musical interpretation of each of these naively opposed characters, and we have a poetic idea sufficiently rich to kindle the imagination of a composer who was occasionally content with less opulent subjects.

If we now consider the moral, and even Christian, transposition of the fable, regarding the Djinns as symbols of our evil instincts, as personifications of evil, and if we look upon the human soul as resisting the temptations that besiege it, we shall see that the few expressive indications added by Franck to the pianoforte part seem to imply that he had such a programme in mind. The possibility which the type of subject offered him (after describing the struggle between the demons and the true faith), of according victory to the latter (as we read in the final bars of the score), must have been too dear to his heart not to have inclined him towards this conception, under cover of a picturesque title which, without completely revealing the meaning of the composition, should yet prevent too erroneous an interpretation of it.

However, other reasons than these (which one may ignore without loss) give 'Les Djinns' a special interest.

In choosing the form of the symphonic poem for orchestra and pianoforte (the latter being regarded as indispensable to the other instruments and not as a solo instrument provided with an accompaniment), Franck affirms his desire to subordinate the instrument to the music, and to put virtuosity in its right place. Not that he dreads its use, as he successfully proves in 'Les Djinns' itself; but, whilst

admitting that it forms part of the special poetry of the pianoforte, he does not intend that it should impede the rational development of the music, or be regarded as an additional embellishment.

Among French composers, Berlioz alone, so far as we know, had anticipated Franck in this conception of the rôle of the soloist, by writing for the viola, in 'Harold,' a prominent part which, nevertheless, did not impose upon the orchestra that state of subjection from which it suffers in so many concertos.

Here we are pleased to find ourselves in full agreement with d'Indy, and to note the importance of this readjustment of musical values and its effect upon contemporary production, and consequently upon the taste of performers and public. Amongst the remarkable works deriving from 'Les Djinns,' we include d'Indy's 'Symphonie sur un thème montagnard,' already mentioned, doubtless the most perfect and convincing proof of the excellence of the form. We would also mention the 'Prometheus' of Scriabin, the 'Burleske' of Richard Strauss, the 'Fantaisie' of Debussy, and, nearer to our own times, the 'Fantaisie' of Fauré, 'Mon Lac' by Witkowski, and Manuel de Falla's three nocturnes, 'Nights in the Gardens of Spain.'

No doubt this is a mere sketch of the manifestations of a musical activity extending over forty years. None the less, it is sufficient to show the importance of the Franckist conception, and (in spite of the diverse styles and tendencies created by it), its resultant quality. By compelling the virtuoso to abandon his domineering rôle, we have the music itself standing out as the most important element.

From the point of view of construction, 'Les Djinns' presents no very noteworthy peculiarity. As already indicated, everything is based on the contrast between two sentiments: the one of a rhythmic nature, dominating, almost aggressive; the other melodic, moving from a state of disquiet and even anguish on to the confident appeasement of answered prayer. First, the orchestra, in a lively *tempo* sort of fantastic Scherzo, gives forth a dull rhythm abruptly answering the *pizzicati* of the basses, whence rises the plaint of a melodic figure. Then a few bars, martial rather than demoniacal, suddenly interrupted by the flashing zig-zag of pianoforte passages, commence, in the form of a dialogue between soloist and orchestra, the presentation of the main theme, vehement and authoritative.

A lull enables the pianoforte to introduce the second subject, first uncertain and timorous, then expressing its disquiet in a long descending chromatic phrase, made even more appealing by the rapidity of the accompaniment which whirls it along. An almost classic development of these themes ends in the striking appearance of ternary rhythm, at once tumultuous and grave, whose imposing expansion contrasts with the rush of the first cadence precipitated by an imperious *crescendo*.

Here the pianoforte, in a splendid recitative, gives itself full play, progressively carrying us from fear to hope, as suggested by Franck's indications which give the key to the interpretation of this passage. He says at first: *Suppliant, mais avec inquiétude et un peu d'agitation*, and then during the lyrical outburst of eight bars whilst the orchestra is silent: *Peu à peu avec plus de calme et de confiance*. This is a thrilling moment of intense expressiveness and fervour, which an unexpected modulation from minor to major seems to illumine with a heavenly radiance.

After a brief pause, broken anew by the rhythmic activity of the opening themes, this time accompanied by a sneer from the clarinets, there follows an almost exact repetition of the opening development, which Franck (in spite of the freedom which the choice of subject seemed to allow) conducts along the most conventional tonal scheme, including the traditional return to the tonic for the re-statement of the second subject.

Towards the end, however, he introduces an important modification of feeling, thus, as already remarked, becoming more fully assimilated with Hugo's verse. Instead of the original *crescendo* we have a *diminuendo* leading on to the peroration, in which there reappears, abbreviated and deprived of its pathetic character, the ternary motive which was the culminating point of the composition.

In a somewhat biased and not very sympathetic book, to which we shall refer again, Saint-Saëns makes the following remarks, which, in spite of their hostile nature, are true enough :

Berlioz was more an artist than a musician ; Franck was more a musician than an artist. He was not a poet : the sense of the picturesque appears to be lacking in his music.

The judgment is somewhat inadequate, and it would be advisable to know whether all poetry comes under the unexpected dilemma : to be or not to be . . . picturesque.

Still, there can be no doubt that here indeed was a blank in the genius of Franck, and that, dealing with a subject one of whose elements was to be the musical evocation of a fantastic, almost demoniacal, world, he was bound to fail in realising this aspect of it. It was impossible for Franck to liberate himself, even by the most unreal and fantastic of descriptions, from the discipline of traditional forms and regulations which, both by instinct and by education, he regarded as the essence of musical expression.

We have reliable information that sometimes he did not know what would be the nature of his next composition, though he had determined beforehand its modulations. It is on an ideal plan of this kind, where the desire for tonal equilibrium comes before rhythmic or melodic inspiration strictly so called, that are based such masterpieces as the Symphony, the Quartet, or the Organ Chorals. This is not a criticism of method ; the results are sufficiently eloquent and conclusive, in spite of the opinion of Saint-Saëns. So rare a faculty, however, inevitably had its drawbacks, and although the passages in 'Les Djinns' which we regard as religious, are of a nature favourable to their emotional and fervid character, on the other hand the fragments dealing with the movements of the Evil Spirits (which after all were to create the atmosphere of the work) are lacking in the boldness and originality of idea and execution which would have completed the exceptional success of a composition remarkable in its details.

Franck's pupils frequently spoke with wonder of the remarkable stretch of his fingers. Madame Rongier's portrait of him seated at the organ shows that he could easily extend his fingers over a compass of twelve notes. Such a peculiarity could not fail to influence the trend of his style ; it constitutes the real—even the only—material difficulty in playing his compositions.

Franck himself wrote the two-pianoforte arrangement of 'Les Djinns' which appeared on February 15, 1884, in the Litolff collection published at Paris, by Enoch, ten years previous to the orchestral score.

The first performance of the orchestral version took place on March 15, 1885, at the Châtelet, under the direction of Edouard Colonne, with Louis Diémer at the pianoforte. In its account of the concert, the *Art Musical* of March 31 did not even mention Franck's work, but dwelt admiringly upon the 'Rapsodie d'Auvergne' and Diémer's brilliant playing. The *Ménestrel*, however, over the signature of G. Mersac, published the following lines, which must have been very acceptable to Franck, so little accustomed to praise :

M. L. Diémer gave an artistic interpretation of the pianoforte part in a symphonic poem by M. César Franck, 'Les Djinns,' a very interesting work by reason of its simple originality of idea and its admirable perfection of style. Listening to these fine developments and the curious sonorities produced by the blend of pianoforte with orchestra, we could not help thinking how truly pitiful it was that we do not see more frequently on our programmes the name of this eminent musician, so little appreciated at the moment, though he will assuredly come to be regarded as one of the masters of the age.*

* The reception by the public was respectful, and no more, the applause being given quite as much to the interpreter as to the composer. Franck, moreover, always ready to regard the slightest testimony of sympathy as a reward beyond his deserts, was the first to attribute the success to Diémer. At the end of the concert, as he went to congratulate him in the foyer of the Châtelet, he promised that he would prove his gratitude by dedicating to him *une petite chose*. The 'Variations Symphoniques' were to be this 'little thing.'

(To be continued.)

NEW CHAPTERS IN THE HISTORY OF 'BORIS GODUNOV'

BY M.-D. CALVOCORESSI

A good many things have happened with regard to 'Boris Godunov' since last I wrote on Mussorgsky. It will be remembered that this work, first produced in 1874 and withdrawn after twenty performances, was thenceforth consigned to oblivion until 1896, when it reappeared in Rimsky-Korsakov's revision ; and that to the present time it remains practically unknown except in the revised form—Pierre d'Alheim being the first to protest against Rimsky-Korsakov's alterations. Copies of the genuine version (published in 1875, in vocal score) were for a time fairly plentiful among students of Mussorgsky's music—at least in France. But by the time interest in Mussorgsky had begun to be shown in other countries outside Russia, the 1875 score had apparently become altogether un procurable, and weird legends arose of one, or perhaps two, copies kept under lock and key by their fortunate but selfish owners. Most critics who referred to the differences between the two versions, and especially to the sharp denunciations of Rimsky-Korsakov's arrangement which now and then cropped up, were compelled to declare that the only possible course was to suspend judgment until they should be enabled to draw their own conclusions.

The position has now changed. A lover of Mussorgsky, one of the very first outside Russia to become acquainted with 'Boris Godunov,' M. R. Godet, succeeding where others had failed time after time, has persuaded a publishing firm to re-issue the text of the vocal score of 1875. The publishers, Messrs. J. & W. Chester, deserve hearty congratulations. The reprint is attractive in all respects, translations

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into English and French are provided, and there is a wealth of portraits and other illustrations.*

At the time when the publication of this reprint was first announced, the original publishers, Messrs. Bessel, brought out a re-issue—made, I think, from photographs of the 1875 edition. This is less attractively got up, and lacks the English and French translations. But the fact remains that there are two sources from which the vocal score of 'Boris Godunov,' as actually written by Mussorgsky, is obtainable. It would have been natural to expect that following upon these re-issues, the leading critics who had suspended judgment as to the rights and wrongs of Rimsky-Korsakov (and—what is even more important—the right of Mussorgsky to stand or fall by his own achievement) would avail themselves of the opportunity to compare the two texts and pronounce. But, I fear, nothing of the sort has occurred so far: indeed, the only extensive article in English on the re-issued 'Boris' that I have seen is by Mr. Edwin Evans, who has known the 1875 edition for years. One critic whose attention I called to the matter, replied: 'But, my dear fellow, is it so important as all that? After all, "Boris Godunov" is only an opera. The only point of interest is, which version acts better?'

Of course, even if they failed to agree with this summary view, all lovers of Mussorgsky were eagerly awaiting further developments, and longing for the orchestral score to become available so that the genuine 'Boris' could be produced. And in the meantime, a wonderful story came to light.

It was known, through the Russian biographers of Mussorgsky, that the version performed in 1874 was not the very first, but an after-thought and in some respects a compromise, certain parts being altered, others introduced, by way of a sop to the managers of the Petrograd Opera and upon the advice of Mussorgsky's friends. But it is only of late that Prof. Paul Lamm, of Moscow, started work on the first, hitherto unpublished and unknown version, which is shortly to be published with all variants and additions made by Mussorgsky himself.

The time to write the full history of the genuine 'Boris Godunov' has not yet come. Knowledge of the actual facts will lend additional zest to the instructive task of comparing Mussorgsky's first draft with the second, and Mussorgsky's own work with that of his reviser.

This much, however, I wish to say forthwith: the first draft, the outcome of Mussorgsky's unhampered, enthusiastic, swift work, shows, from the purely musical point of view, how very sure and apposite his methods were. There has been so much talk of his lack of skill that certain people might now and then be tempted to imagine him as proceeding by a series of random shots, hitting or missing the mark, as the case might be—although he very seldom, if ever, missed it. But a comparison between the first genuine 'Boris' and the second will reveal the actual intuitive logic that co-operated with his imagination, and will account for many things that in the second 'Boris' may appear to be just incredibly lucky 'bull's-eyes.'

I do not wish to imply that the 1874 'Boris' is to be considered in any way inferior to the primitive. This is a question whose solution may wait. What

Mussorgsky himself thought of his changes and additions will probably never be known. Nor will it ever be possible to fathom the meaning of the mysterious line in the title-page of the published vocal score: 'Including scenes not intended for performance'—a line which may be used by any producer wishing to omit any scene in the work.

D'Alheim, in his book, expressed the view that Mussorgsky gave a pretty clear hint as to his feelings when he made the Tsarevich say to his father, with regard to the episode of the parrot (which is one of the added *hors d'œuvre* or interludes): 'Is it meet that I should divert your thoughts to such nonsense?'

But the main verdict is not hard to anticipate. Gradually, the genuine 'Boris' will oust the Rimsky-Korsakov revision from the place this had usurped, and the revision will remain—together with the famous copy of the 'Tristan' score annotated by Berlioz—a document of purely 'archaeological' interest, as Rimsky-Korsakov himself, in the preface to his revision, says of Mussorgsky's original.

SOME ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

BY ARTHUR T. FROGGATT

The announcement that after 1928 Queen's Hall will be no longer available for orchestral concerts, which has caused so much astonishment to the easy-going individuals who take it for granted that what has been will be, brings us sharply up against a problem which, sooner or later, had to be faced. And even if the announcement proves to be a false alarm, and it is found possible to save the hall from the threatened degradation, the actual problem before us will be very far from being solved. Queen's Hall is not the whole of London, and London is not the whole of England; and if it were otherwise, Queen's Hall is not the whole of the difficulty.

Nearly everything is much more expensive than it was before the war, and there is urgent need for economy in national expenditure in all directions. These are mere truisms, admitted by everybody; although there is little evidence of any really earnest desire to act in accordance with them. And they render the idea of state aid for opera or any other kind of music an idle dream. Even if it were not so, subsidised art is an un-English notion, unworthy of a self-reliant people. Certain municipalities, attractive from a residential point of view, may find that it pays to encourage music; but this consideration does not affect the general argument. Why should people pay for something they do not want, in order that other people may enjoy it? We have already pauperised the (so-called) working class in many ways: why commence the pauperisation of the middle class?

Concert-halls are very expensive, especially so, I suppose, in the West-End. The Royal Philharmonic Society, during the season 1925-26, paid £352 in rent—a little more than £58 per concert, including two rehearsals for each. It seems a large amount, but I imagine it represents no more than a fair interest on capital invested. For the last concert of the season lately ended, the venue was changed to the Royal Albert Hall, with the result that the disbursement for rent will be considerably greater. The amounts mentioned above do not include the expenses of attendants, police, and firemen.

* Its publication was followed by that of a volume (in French) by M. Robert Godet, unassumingly entitled 'En marge de Boris,' which contains much useful historical and biographical information taken from the best Russian sources.

Sir Landon Ronald, if I remember aright, has given his opinion that orchestral concerts can never be made to pay. But surely, in the very nature of things, there must be something wrong in this. Orchestral concerts *must* be made to pay, and music-lovers can never rest satisfied until they have discovered an answer to the question, How?

Whatever may be possible in the way of reducing expenses in other directions, I am convinced that there is one in which much may be done, namely, in the reduction of the total number of the band. It is quite time to make a serious protest against the overgrown orchestras of the present day. I maintain that twenty-four strings—six first violins, six seconds, four violas, four violoncellos, and four double-basses—are sufficient for all ordinary occasions. Of course, every performer must be thoroughly efficient, and as reliable as the second clarinet or the second bassoon. The late T. R. Croger, in his 'Notes on Conductors and Conducting' (pp. 40-41), has some very sensible remarks on this subject. If such a force is sufficient to balance the usual complement of wood, brass, and percussion, as has been proved over and over again, why should double (often more than double) that number be engaged? Of course there may be differences of opinion as to the ideal number of the stringed instruments, and also as to the proportion between the five groups; but at any rate, when the question of economy is urgent, here is an opportunity for considering it. Even if we grant that more strings are desirable, it is surely better to have a smaller orchestra than none at all.

Now that it has become the universal custom to write for four horns (although, as Mr. Frederick Corder says, two would often suffice), we find, when Beethoven's Symphonies, and even Mozart's, are played, the third and fourth horns are directed to double the first and second—partly, I suppose, because there is nothing else for them to do, and partly because the strings are too powerful. Then, as a result of this overloading, the horns are too much for the wood-wind. And so one extravagance leads to another.

When the strings become too numerous, the rest of the orchestra is thrown out of scale. The wood-wind must be increased to sixteen, the trombones to six, and so on. To this multiplication there is really no limit, except the seating capacity of the building. In the Albert Hall, for example, you could never have too many violins; but a solo passage on a flute or an oboe sounds like the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

It will be said that our large choral societies would smother such a band as I propose. Of course they would. As it is, they always do. To accompany the Royal Choral Society I would have forty-eight violins, sixteen violas, sixteen violoncellos, sixteen double-basses, thirty-two wood-wind (four to each part), eight horns (sixteen if four are written for), eight trumpets, twelve trombones, and four tubas, with four sets of kettle-drums. That is to say, I would quadruple every instrument in my orchestra. Then we might obtain a suitable balance of sound.

The general tendency in this country is to have far too numerous a chorus in proportion to the orchestra, hence the latter is, in many cases, completely 'swamped,' and important instrumental effects are rendered simply inaudible because the chorus is too large. An instance of the prejudicial results of this tendency recently came under the notice of the author. At a concert given by a choral society, in which the band numbered nearly fifty and the chorus about a

hundred and forty, complaints were made by some of the audience that 'the band was too loud,' the real fact being that the balance of tone was so much more correct than that to which they were accustomed, that when the orchestra was brought into sufficient prominence, instead of the chorus (as usual) domineering over everything, the conclusion was at once arrived at that such a state of things must be wrong. Our overgrown choral societies have misled public taste in this matter.*

Another result of this love of huge choruses is that when solo singers and chorus unite their efforts in *forte* passages, the former are drowned also, sharing the fate of the orchestra. Now at St. Paul's Cathedral it has been the custom for the boy choristers to sing the soprano solos in the 'St. Matthew' Passion together, and certainly with marvellous effect; and at the concerts of the Royal Choral Society I should like to hear three, if not four, voices in each of the solo parts. I admit that this would entail a lot of practice; and the 'soloists' would have to know their parts a little better than is sometimes the case.

When democracy has come into its own, we shall doubtless possess an auditorium twice the size of the Royal Albert Hall; and then the figures which I have given above will all have to be doubled. There is no such thing as standing still in matters of art.

But instead of peering into the future, let us for a moment consider one or two little things of the past. The very small choruses of Bach and Handel and their contemporaries are accounted for by the fact that they consisted practically of trained musicians, placed in front of the band, instead of behind it. In those days there was no antithesis implied in the expression, 'musicians and singers.' Such a body so placed was well able to hold its own on occasion. And even at the present day, how much more perfect is the balance between chorus and orchestra at the opera than in the concert room, mainly because the numbers are more nearly equal.

Again: turn to the *Presto* at the end of the great 'Leonora' Overture (misnamed No. 3), and look at the direction in the score—'due o tre violini,' and again the same at the entry of the second fiddles. Who pays any attention to such directions nowadays? Some one says, 'Bah! Beethoven's orchestra is as dead as Queen Anne.' Or glance at the 'Dies iræ' in Cherubini's 'Requiem' in C minor—one of the noblest pieces of sacred music ever penned. Six bars for horns, trumpets, and trombones on G; then a single blow on a tam-tam in E flat (never heard again)—to depict the day of judgment and end of the world. Why, a modern composer would make more row in a 'Hymn to Apollo,' or even in an 'Ode on the Death of Cock Robin.'

To sum up. In these troublous times, if we wish to keep our orchestras going, I think we shall have to be content with less noise and (possibly) more music. Some of us are able to recollect what Manns was accustomed to do at the Crystal Palace every day of the week with only nineteen strings—six first violins, four seconds, and of violas, violoncellos, and double-basses three each. Let our modern geniuses be content with the orchestra that satisfied Beethoven. If, however, they insist on a larger number, whether of strings, wind, or percussion, let it be clearly understood that they themselves must find the money for the payment of these luxuries.

* E. Prout, 'Instrumentation,' p. 122 (Novello).

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WORTHLESS DIPLOMAS

It has long been a drawback that articles on this topic have been almost entirely confined to the musical press, which reaches only a comparatively small portion of the public—and the portion that is least in need of the information. We were therefore glad to see in the *Daily Mail* of May 9 a well-informed and temperately worded article on the subject. It is so handy a summary that we reprint it, by kind permission of the Editor of the *Daily Mail*:

MUSICIANS BY PURCHASE

AND MUSICIANS BY TALENT TRADE IN VALUELESS DEGREES

DIPLOMAS THAT COUNT

It is astonishing how ready people are to be impressed by a row of letters after a music teacher's name. Their knowledge of what those letters represent is generally of the vaguest, but their mere presence inspires confidence.

Consequently teachers find it necessary to acquire some letters to place after their names. Some may even have the desire to don academic robes or hoods and other articles of millinery, such as college caps with tassels.

Since the demand stimulates the supply, there will always be obliging people ready, for a consideration, to supply fancy letterings, with or without fancy attire. The former cost them nothing, and the latter yields a handsome profit. That is the basis of the trade in worthless degrees.

Of course, there are usually examinations of a sort. Even if the proportion of successful candidates appears large, the promoters can quote other examinations of unimpeachable standard to which the same applies. They do not feel called upon to explain that candidates for these are mostly prepared by expert teachers who do not allow them to present themselves unless they have a genuine prospect of success.

RUN FOR PROFIT

Proprietary institutions, run for profit, have every inducement, first to attract all the candidates they can, whatever their standard, for the sake of the entrance fees, and then to pass as many of them as they can, for the good of the trade. The first test of a musical degree is: does it emanate from a public institution or from a proprietary concern run for personal profit?

For many years various musical bodies have conducted a campaign against these concerns conferring worthless degrees. They have not yet succeeded in their main object: to enforce the registration of properly qualified teachers by a central authority. But they have succeeded so far that there are professional journals now which refuse the advertisements of institutions conferring degrees of doubtful value, and that no eminent musician allows his name to be associated, in whatever capacity, with such concerns. Hence the second test: examine the lists of governors or directors. Take no notice of non-musicians, however distinguished. Look for the names of distinguished musicians.

A DOUBLE FRAUD

Generally speaking, musical degrees can be divided into three classes: those which are recognised by the whole musical world as conveying a definite standard of proficiency; those which, while the organization conferring them may be free from suspicion, are for various reasons not generally recognised; and those which are definitely spurious, representing no ascertainable standard, and merely issued for profit.

The fraud implied in these last is a dual one: on the candidate himself (though, of course, there are also candidates who, knowing themselves to be unqualified for a genuine degree, acquire a doubtful one for the sake of attracting pupils); and on the pupils, who are led to believe that the teacher is competent.

There are still American colleges and 'universities' ready, on terms, to confer a degree of Mus. Doc., waiving the test of personal examination. And there are still holders of such degrees, purchased in former years, who have not been persuaded to discard them. Among these are some of the worst offenders.

ADVICE TO PUPILS

The best advice one can give is obvious: in selecting a teacher, give the preference to letters indicating the diplomas of the Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music, and Royal College of Organists. Next, and with practically equal significance, come those of Trinity College of Music; then, though the standard has not always been as high as at present, the Guildhall School of Music. With these you should know what qualifications to expect.*

With others, of which there is a long list, it is impossible to know. The teacher may be competent and an innocent dupe, or he may be innocently incompetent, or he may be neither competent nor innocent.

* To the institutions named in this paragraph should be added the Royal Manchester College of Music. The omission was pointed out by the Registrar in a letter to the *Daily Mail* of May 10.—EDITOR, *M.T.*

THE EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

BY ARTHUR T. FROGGATT

The number of works in the present exhibition is considerably in excess of that of any exhibition of the last few years. There are a hundred and ten more oil paintings than there were in 1926; and the total number of works exceeds that of last year by no less than two hundred and fifty-three. On the other hand, the proportion of those in which any reference to music can be discovered is a trifle less, being about one in fifty-four. There are many pictures of great merit, both among portraits and landscapes. Historical subjects are, as usual, few in number; and there are several objects, chiefly oil paintings, which can only be described as a disgrace to the walls of the Academy. But they do not occur among those to which I have to draw attention.

It has often struck me as a remarkable fact that in the large number of 'rooms' and 'interiors' which decorate the walls of picture galleries, one very seldom observes the presence of a musical instrument of any kind. 'An Artist's Home' (135), by H. Davis Richter, is a pleasant exception to the rule.

Among the portraits there are more violinists than I can remember having seen on any former occasion; and the first of these is 'Miss Anne Harcourt' (165), by George Harcourt, a diploma work. The violin is foreshortened—in other words, it is shown at a disadvantage. 'A Venetian Night' (228), by James Durden, with a female figure in the foreground, has a mirror reflecting the form of a man playing a lute outside the chamber.

'Portrait of a Fiddle-Maker' (314), by George H. B. Holland, is a delightful picture—a face full of intellect and charm, and the best violin in the Academy. In the same room 'A Palais de Danse' (326), by Frederick W. Elwell, hardly deserves mention here, being summed up in one word—jazz.

Among the fifteen pictures in Gallery VI., 'Music' (346), by Agnes C. Tatham, is archaic and flat, but by no means unpleasing. In the centre are three female (or angelic?) figures performing—one upon an obsolete type of trumpet, and the others upon stringed instruments.

In Gallery VII. are two musical subjects, one from ancient Greece, the other of to-day. 'Aristeus and Proteus' (404), by John Cooke, shows the son of Apollo engaged in fettering the sea-god; while amidst the figures in the background we may see if not 'hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.' In 'Changing Guard at Buckingham Palace' (417), Fred Roe has had the good taste to paint the clarinets, piccolos, and side-drums in the foreground, accomplishing the task with great skill.

Gallery VIII. presents four musical subjects. 'Our Lady of the Spring' (442), by Mark Symons—a very beautiful picture recalling Botticelli—among its many figures contains one of a girl playing a cornetto curvo, and a flying cherub blowing a small trumpet. 'The Musician' (457), by M. Lindsay Williams, is looking to the left while she is performing upon her violoncello—doubtless by direction of the artist. Now when musicians play from note they look straight in front, and when they play from memory they look at their instrument: this unhappy lady is doing neither. Moreover, there is a curious light upon a portion of the belly of the 'cello, making it look as though a large amount of resin had been allowed to remain upon it. Apart from these peculiarities, the picture is a good one. 'The L.N.E.R. Musical Society at Queen's Hall' (458), by Frederick W. Elwell, is the most important work, from a musical point of view, in the Academy. Almost photographic in its accuracy, it can scarcely be called a beautiful picture; yet it is a most effective one. The large number of twenty-four first violins, together with an evident paucity of 'cellos and basses, sufficiently indicates the usual want of balance in amateur orchestras. 'Symphony' (494), by Harold Speed, is oddly named, seeing that a grand pianoforte is the only instrument in use at the moment, although a violin and bow are lying on a settee in the background, with a volume of Bach in the familiar green cover of the Peters edition beside them. But that is the only fault to be found with the picture.

In Gallery IX., 'Bessie, wife of Colonel Massy' (502), by Annie L. Swynnerton, is supposed to be singing 'Oh for the touch of a vanished hand,' to her own accompaniment. The artist needs to be reminded that while curved lines are all very well in the case of a lady's robe, perfectly straight ones are indispensable when depicting the keys of a pianoforte. 'Nocturne' (536), by Walter E. Webster, represents two figures on a garden seat, one of whom has a mandoline, or some such instrument. 'Annie Laurie' (585), by Charles Spencelayh, shows a deaf old gentleman listening with evident enjoyment to his gramophone; every detail painted with the minute accuracy for which this artist is so remarkable.

There are yet two more violin pictures among the oil paintings, neither of which is very remarkable. 'Denise' (637), by Oswald Moser (which, by the way, is a water-colour), is the portrait of a young fiddler who is at any rate looking in the right direction while playing. In 'Flowers and Fiddle' (641), by Frederick H. S. Shepherd, I much prefer the flowers to the fiddle, for the latter looks as though the varnish had been forgotten.

In Gallery XI., 'The Picnic' (671), by Mary Adshead, is a clever imitation of tapestry work, containing several figures, one of whom is playing a lute. 'At the Palais' (734), by Frank C. Medworth, is decidedly 'futurist' in treatment, with a jazz band in the distance—the painting worthy of the subject, and the subject worthy of the painting.

In the South Rooms, so far as the water-colours and miniatures are concerned, I was unable to discover the slightest reference to music; and was not much more fortunate with the drawings, engravings, and etchings. I can only mention 'The Bell' (1112), line engraving by Robert Austin, and 'L'Opéra, Paris' (1181), pen drawing by Hanslip Fletcher. In the architectural room I noticed 'Nyman's, Handcross, Sussex' (1321), by Walter Tapper; interior of hall, with a gallery containing an organ, of which three flat towers were the principal feature.

My search in the department of sculpture was more successful. 'Chanson triste' (1452), by Alfred Buxton, depicts a Greek girl (in relief) playing a cithara. 'A Dancing Procession' (1472), by David Evans, consists of eight quite small figures in bronze relief, playing various instruments (lyre, trumpet, and cymbals)—an excellent composition. 'Wine and Song' (1490), by Charles L. J. Doman, in relief, consists of two female figures, one with a chelys and the other holding a cup. The double flute enjoys a certain measure of popularity this year: there are three examples in the Lecture Room—'Pan and the Infant Bacchus' (1509), relief by Donald Gilbert; 'The Stolen Pipes' (1511), a statuette-group in bronze by Walter Marsden; and 'Pan' (1569), a statuette-group also by Donald Gilbert. 'The Piper' (1538), a statue by Amy Robinson, is a child with a slender tuba. 'A Musician' (1556), bust by Albert Toft, struck me as being one of the best works in the Academy.

Last year I ventured to complain of an overdose of the syrinx, and now I was congratulating myself that I was getting through without meeting it. But no; it was lying in wait for me; and in 'Young Pan' (1638), a group by Prudence E. Penn, I encountered it at last. The knock-out blow came from 'Syrinx' (1653), head (lead), by Charles Wheeler, and I departed in search of tea.

The Musician's Bookshelf

'The Science of Pianoforte Technique.' By Thomas Fielden, Professor of the Pianoforte, Royal College of Music.

[Macmillan, 8s. 6d.]

This is a book which will undoubtedly provoke much discussion amongst pianists and teachers of the pianoforte. It is not put forward, we are told, as a new method of technique, but has been designed as a scientific treatise. On page 142 the author writes :

The progress of pianoforte playing and teaching has advanced enormously in the last twenty-five years; knowledge of the subject has developed to the point where there can be no room for any particular method, and the time has come for technique to be regarded as a science. It may be that this book will help, however imperfectly, to establish such a science on a definite basis. This, at any rate, has been its purpose. . . . There still remains the great field to be explored by the new science of Psychology. It may be that future teachers will be able to analyse the minute and intricate nervous organism of the arms and hands, and harness it in such a way as to shorten the present prolonged period necessary for the attainment of nervous control. Whenever and however such a result may be achieved, it must be based on scientific facts, and not on any personal idiosyncrasy of one

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The writer goes on to point out that a further defect that arose lay in the uncontrolled use of the weight, the cause of which was 'too much insistence on complete instead of gradual, and balanced relaxation of the controlling muscles,' often resulting in a hard tone. Both Matthay and Breithaupt held the idea of eliminating physical stiffness, and in this way

. . . each was reaching towards a nervous solution rather than a physical one. . . It is this question of nervous control which has come to the front now, in the light of the knowledge of the theory that technique is ultimately mental, and it shows the way to a solution of all technical problems that beset the pianist.

The author's theories are fully developed in subsequent chapters, and frequently illustrated by apt analogy. In Chapter 2—'The Physiological Conditions in the Development of Technique'—three main factors are considered: the mental, the nervous, and the muscular. In discussing the second of these, the writer condemns the holding down of four fingers and operating with one finger (as a technical exercise for independence of finger):

One of the most important nervous functions is that of isolating muscular movements: independence of fingers, for instance, is gained not so much by muscular

restraint of the non-operating fingers (which produces, indeed connotes, a form of stiffness) as by keeping away all nervous connection with those fingers, and concentrating the nervous impulses on the operating ones. . . The real solution lies in endeavouring to isolate nervously the operating finger, and to eliminate as much as possible all nervous communication with the others. The corollary of all this, and it is one that every student should grasp from the beginning, is that nervous control connotes muscular control, and that a great deal of time spent in hard muscular exercises can be saved by the realisation of this fact.

The desirability of a knowledge of muscular processes, and of a deep study of the marvellous mechanism of the hands and arms, is urged; and the goal should be 'the mental and nervous control of all the movements of which these wonderful implements are capable.'

In the following chapter the muscles used in pianoforte playing are briefly described, with the help of a number of illustrations.

A chapter is devoted to 'Technical Training by Gymnastics.' The writer holds the opinion that the technical training of the pianist should be divided into two parts. One part (the muscular) should be to a very large extent away from the keyboard, and the other part, that dealing with movement at the keyboard. Gymnastics away from the keyboard are therefore recommended,

. . . provided that the student applies himself to their relation to keyboard work, and cultivates his nervous swiftness as well as his physical strength.

Numerous exercises are given for the shoulder, upper-arm, forearm, fingers, and thumb. Systematic daily attention to these exercises will, we are told, endow the student with all the equipment he needs.

'The Act of Touch' is considered under two main headings: 'Leverage' and the 'Point of Contact.' Under the latter, we read:

The muscular organism is never fully contracted until the point of contact is reached; and all is in a state of nervous preparation for that point. Stiffness in playing arises from too much contraction beforehand—nervous tension and fear of weakness at the critical moment; too much relaxation before this moment, on the other hand, leads either to flabbiness or to hard, thumping tone. True suppleness lies in securing the full contraction at the right moment, neither before nor after; this constitutes *perfect timing*. Finally, at the point of contact the muscles are not in relaxation at all, as advocated by the devotees of relaxation; on the contrary, they are in contraction, but resilient, preparatory, if necessary, for relaxation, but most frequently using their resilience to carry the arm to its next movement.

Following a most interesting chapter on 'The Undulatory Wrist Movement,' further discussion on the subject of relaxation is resumed under the provocative headings, 'The Relaxation Fallacies; the Psychology of Resilience,' and the chapter following, 'Contraction and Fixation.' The necessity for the training of the power of discrimination between relaxation and contraction, or, in other words, the recognition of the equal importance of both these faculties of muscular action, is emphasised:

The fault of the old schools was the teaching of too much contraction and stiffness: the great danger of the later schools is that of too much insistence on the opposite extremes.

The author has something fresh to say on the 'Rotation Theory.' He speaks of the confusion of thought about this, as about other technical matters, due to the lack of accurate physiological observation and knowledge, and the absence of the application of the laws of mechanics to the problem :

Even the advocates of the weight school have stumbled in the matter. . . . Their theory is correct, but incomplete, and in many ways their application of it is wrong, physiologically and mechanically.

Forearm rotation, he argues, can be used only for broken octaves and kindred passages, certain tremolo passages, and shakes fingered 1 3, 2 4, and 3 5. After investigating certain misconceptions, he proceeds to demonstrate the true nature of the real rotary movement—not that of the forearm, but of the *elbow*. The rotatory movement of the elbow (and in some cases of the wrist) is that used particularly in extensions, and in the application of power to the weaker fingers.

Other chapters deal with 'Vibrato' (Tremolo), the 'Fingers,' 'Suggestions for Teaching,' &c. There are three valuable appendices, dealing respectively with 'Rhythm,' 'Fingering,' and 'Some Examples for Study.' In the first of these the author delivers a sane and much-needed protest against the distortions of rhythm indulged in by pianists 'in their so-called interpretation of the Romantic composers'—particularly Chopin. Under 'Fingering' are some practical and suggestive comments on the fingering of repeated notes and of extended *arpeggio* passages. The last appendix illustrates by means of a number of musical examples the method of working outlined in the book.

Many will doubtless disagree emphatically with some of the author's conclusions. Nevertheless, in view of the fresh light he has thrown on certain vital aspects of pianoforte technique, it seems safe to predict that one consequence of the issue of this treatise will be a serious reconsideration of some present-day methods of teaching.

G. G.

'Purcell.' Par Henri Dupré.

[Paris : Librairie Félix Alcan.

A French book on an English composer is a rarity ; and one that is so well-informed and understanding as this of M. Dupré's is indeed a matter for gratitude. M. Dupré's success is largely due to his copious knowledge of English music and literature in general. He realises the English point of view in a measure rare among Continental writers. And the closeness of his contact with our present day is seen in a variety of matters. For example, in speaking of Weelkes, he calls him :

... auteur de délicieux madrigaux, dans lequel le maître contemporain Gustave Holst salua son ancêtre musical, à une réunion tenue par la Société du madrigal du Kingston-on-Thames, le 3 novembre 1923 ;

and in discussing the ancestry of Purcell he alludes to a recent article by Dr. Purcell-Taylor in the *Radio Times*—an article containing some random statements that were combated in this journal. (M. Dupré himself had his doubts about them ; he tells us that he wrote to Dr. Purcell-Taylor for confirmation on some points, but received no reply.) He is well acquainted, too, with all the English books on Purcell, and discusses with insight many points raised by Cummings, Fuller-Maitland, Bridge, and

others. The bulk of his book, however, is concerned with the music. Here he shows a knowledge of the Purcell Society volumes that probably exceeds that of all but a few of the members. No department of the composer's work is untouched, and the treatment is remarkable for its blend of discernment and enthusiasm.

After discussing Purcell in relation to Bach and Handel, M. Dupré goes on to point out some curious connections with—of all composers!—Franck and Wagner. He quotes a theme from Franck's setting of Psalm cl., and shows it to be singularly like that used by Purcell for the passage, 'Be Thou exalted, Lord,' in the anthem 'Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem.' As both bear some resemblance to the fifth Gregorian Tone, however, it is probable that they had a common origin, deliberately chosen. More remarkable is the Wagner example. M. Dupré thinks that Wagner knew Purcell's music, and that the 'Mastersingers' Overture owed something to the following from the Ode of 1682 :



He also draws attention to the undoubtedly influence of Purcell on Fauré's String Quartet—a matter discussed by André Mangeot in *Le Monde Musical* of October, 1925, and again in a recent issue of *Music and Letters*.

There is now a revival of interest in Purcell, and for the first time his fellow countrymen are beginning to realise fully his greatness ; the time is thus ripe for a biography that takes into account recent research. The last country to which one would look for such a biography is France, and M. Dupré's work is on all grounds welcome. It will do much for English music in France, and deserves to become a standard authority in England.

H. G.

'Liszt, Wagner, and the Princess.' By William Wallace.

[Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.]

'La Vie de Franz Liszt.' Par Guy de Pourtalès.

[Paris : *Nouvelle Revue Française*.]

Mr. Wallace, having published a couple of years ago a searching study of Wagner's shortcomings has now cast a cold glance on some other queer characters in the 19th century musical comedy.

What it all has to do with music he does not trouble to point out. He takes it for granted (and for our part we think him right) that a musician's character has a certain connection with his music ; but by leaving it at that, without any elaboration, he does not make his case clear to the many who feel rather uncomfortable over all this latter-day scandal-mongering about dead composers.

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There is virtually nothing about music in these books of Mr. Wallace's. He is, of course, too candid to make any sort of pretence. The fact is that he feels an irresistible kind of disgusted interest—an entomological interest—in these musicians of the past.

He despises Liszt. He hates Wagner—to the extreme point of calling him an 'added brain.'* Not that the Leipsic party are let off any more lightly :

Joachim was an opportunist, loyal to Liszt when loyalty paid : disloyal when disloyalty paid better. . . . Schumann, sulking and goaded by that gadfly, his wife.

In fact, he strikes us as an exasperated moralist. The Wagner book was essentially a showing up. The moralist in our author could not, for truth's sake, bear that Wagner—the ill-bred, licentious, and incredibly mean Wagner—should be flattered by posterity because posterity liked his music. Puritanical fervour of this sort is rare in our day, and must always be respected. But Savonarolas and Knoxes have a way of going to irrational extremes. They ask for heavenly perfection (or, at least, for the perfection of English public school conduct), and are furious at finding large quantities of human nature everywhere. Really, if their anger were not so righteous, they would look slightly ridiculous. Is it not ridiculous to reduce Clara Schumann to a 'gadfly' and Wagner to an 'added brain'?

All the while there is so much in the moralist's case, if only it were not over-stated. The moral of Mr. Wallace's new book is incontestable. Liszt, by disregarding the seventh Commandment, involved himself in endless worries and hideous boredom.

No man, surely, not the bravest of the brave, can read the tale of Liszt's mistresses without a tremor. The two chief were bluestockings—one a free-thinker, the other a theologian—of the most formidable character. Truly sin brings its own reward! Liszt's letter-writing to his princess strikes one as a purgatorial exercise. Every day, when they were separated, he wrote—letters of thousands of words at a time. He did it nobly, like the great gentleman he was. But as the years go on the remarkable Polish princess more and more resembles the Old Man of the Sea, and although Liszt's good manners seem hardly ever to have given way, the strain of the relationship afflicts the reader like a nightmare.

This must be in part due to Mr. Wallace's exaggeration—an exaggeration prompted, of course, by the best of motives, for a more effectual warning to a young man just on the threshold of life can hardly be imagined than this picture of the boredom that was the fruit of Liszt's amours. But common-sense tells us it was not quite so bad as that, and indeed Mr. Wallace rather gives himself away.

'It is difficult,' he says, 'to understand what Liszt saw in her.' There is the hostile biographer's confession. His princess is a dragon—ugly, overbearing, pedantic, fanatically religious, and really in the later Roman days less a woman than 'a spider squatting in its web' (p. 128). It is difficult

to understand why Liszt did not turn tail and run from Mr. Wallace's princess the first minute she set eyes on him.

But the fact is, Liszt was for long truly devoted to her. Their Weimar days were by far his most fertile period as a composer. She was a prodigious being in her strength of will and vitality and intellect. If she tyrannised, well, does not a man expect the woman who loves him to tyrannise? She was a bore in the later years, but that is a common ending of romantic attachments, whether or no officially solemnised.

Because our author is so vehement and intolerant, the reader feels impelled to make out the case for the other side. Just what is Mr. Wallace's grudge against the princess? That she had not the proper 'marriage lines'? The poor thing tried hard enough to get them. A sympathetic eye would see something pathetic in that iron-willed woman's almost superstitious cravings for the scrap of paper that Rome dangled before her for years and never granted.

Not that the princess invites sympathy. She is far too masculine and opinionated a being. That, perhaps, is why this biographer cannot bear her. He feels, as most of us do, that he could not possibly have got on with her. But he is not called upon to! Liszt got on quite well. If it could be shown that the princess's influence was deleterious in some way to Liszt's musical work, there would be ground for a grudge. But there is no scrap of such evidence.

Liszt was a great musical nature who failed, as a composer, to make the most of what was in him. It would be interesting if someone tried to explain this. Readable as Mr. Wallace is (such vitalised beings as were in that circle cannot but make good reading), he does not touch the fringe of such an explanation.

Later in the book he dwells on the unnatural harshness of Cosima Wagner towards her aged father. Cosima! There goes another strong woman! As Mr. Wallace tells it, the story is detestable. Yet Cosima (you see, once again we have to try to understand the other side!) was logical enough. Liszt had never treated her really as his daughter. Why should she go out of her way, when her hands were full of Wagner and Bayreuth, and so on, to treat him as a father?

With all respect to the moralist, we feel sure that Liszt's life was not so consistently uncomfortable and worried and enervated as this book makes out. Liszt may have been a failure compared with Wagner, but he must have enjoyed a good many of those years, as pianist, as composer, as prince of good fellows, as social lion—yes, and even perhaps a little sometimes as the blue-stockings' lover.

The Frenchman's book is, of course, very much more like the real thing. It is extremely prettily done, in the best French manner—shapely, sensible, smiling. Somehow it is more sad than the austere Briton's eccentric book.

An old and disillusioned civilization speaks in such French writing. There is sadness in the tolerance of the frittering away of golden opportunities and great material. M. de Pourtalès knows how vain it is to be cross with clever people when they take it into their heads to behave badly and play the fool. You must be an optimist to be as censorious as Mr. Wallace.

C.

* His ill-timed and anonymous attack on "Judentum" was just what was to be expected from so addled a brain' (p. 98).

'Colour-Music: The Art of Light.' By Adrian Bernard Klein.

[Crosby Lockwood, 36s.]

At the outset of this volume the standpoint of the author is clearly defined :

It is an age [he says] of doubt, experiment, and trial Perhaps this dream of a colour-music is merely an aesthetic experiment ; only another proposal for the diversion of tired senses. Nevertheless, for the few who enjoy loveliness, it might snatch one or two more gems from the chaos before the end.

A few pages further on, while discounting an art of colour-music arising from the researches of psychologists, he adds :

. . . only by the agency of poetic imagination will it ever be objectively realised. Natural philosophers (so-called scientists) and psychologists are very rarely poets.

In such wise, also, perhaps, can musicians view the coupling of the two arts. Truly was it said by Pater that all art constantly *aspire*s towards the condition of music. Pater was an artist in words. To aspire is to desire eagerly. In the French language the same word is synonymous with ambition, pursuit. Colour at the moment is aspiring towards music. It is all very interesting, full of beautiful possibilities, but, to a musician, only by analogy can it associate itself in any way with music. It can neither enhance nor enrich it, for music represents the metaphysical of all things physical in the world. Mr. Klein, on the whole, is inclined to the opinion that there is no advantage to be gained by a search for 'parallels' or analogies. Colour-music, he says, must evolve its own principles, which will not of necessity be found to be identical with those of sound music.

In the chapter on colour-music as an independent art, the author interpolates a plate showing a scale of thirty-six degrees of Tone Hue, from red to violet-red, with Ridgeway's nomenclature. It is a beautiful succession of tints. And in music, three octaves of a chromatic scale contain an equal beauty of graduated sound. Form, colour, and motion correspond in the art of light to melody, harmony, and rhythm in music. The French poet Arthur Rimbaud visualised the vowels in colour, and wrote a sonnet to that effect—A, black ; E, white ; I, red ; O, blue ; U, green. The Polish poets, Mickiewicz, Krasinski, Slowacki, were very strongly susceptible to the inter-relation and analogy of music and colour, and they speak of the play of colours, sounds, and lights, and of the enchanting change from one to another.

Father Louis Bertrand Castel (1688-1757), a Jesuit of Montpellier, originated the idea of an ocular harpsichord which recorded a succession of colours corresponding to the notes on the music keyboard. He published his researches in a volume entitled 'Esprits, Saillies, et Singularités.' He carried out the analogy much more on psychological than on physical lines, relating pitch to light and shade, timbre to colour, which Mr. Klein observes would probably be accepted as the psychological analogy nowadays. For musicians who may not be desirous of ocular demonstration of the relation of music to other arts the chapter on 'The Art of Lighting and the Art of Light' may prove interesting. It gives details of the Moscow Art Theatre and of Mr. Gordon Craig's, Max Reinhardt's, and Adolph Appia's experiments and

results in the art of stage lighting. The book is profusely illustrated with plates and figures. These include Prof. Rimington and his colour organ at the pioneer lecture and demonstration of colour-music at St. James's Hall in 1895. In Appendix V. the director of the series of colour-concerts in England (Mr. John Hull Doe) mentions the production of beautiful colour as an added charm to music. But musicians and music-lovers need no extraneous aids to the enjoyment of their art. The ear requires no help from the eye. And even a mental vision of a composer's subject as title to a piece of music is completely extraneous to the sympathetic, rhythmic response of a lover of music to the beauty of workmanship and expression contained in the work. It is well known that given expressions imply given impressions ; and every impression excludes other impressions during the moment in which it dominates. The intermingling therefore of one art with another cannot have any particularly good results for either of them.

Colour-music can be visualised taking shape in many of music's forms. The play of colour representing the inter-related parts in the shapes of sonatas, fugues, pavanes, galliards, and minuets might be made extremely beautiful to those to whom colour is a means of expression. Jazz would be a wild revel of tints and hues.

The analogy of sounds and colours is a fascinating theme, but the border-line of demarcation between the two arts needs no effacing. Tone colour in music is an adaptation of words, and tone-values of instruments are associated with gradations of colour. But out and beyond all figurative words music is a language which needs no extraneous aids from the painter's art. It expresses to each listener his most hidden secrets, and takes possession of his being. By its orderliness and beauty it enslaves the heart and mind, and during the performance of a great orchestral work a trained listener becomes as much a part of the music as any instrumentalist in the orchestra. As separate arts no proof has yet been advanced that either colour or music stand to gain in combining with one another.

L. L.

'Neue Harmonielehre, des Diatonischen, Chromatischen, Viertel-, Drittel-, Sechstel-, und Zwölftel-Tonsystem.' By Alois Haba.

[Leipsic : F. Kistner & C. F. W. Siegel.]

A very old story tells us that while a certain philosopher stood explaining that there could be no such thing as movement, one of his audience retorted simply by starting to walk. Atonal music is solving the question of its existence in very much the same way, and no doubt a majority of writers will continue to use the word 'atonal' in contradistinction to 'tonal' (which naturally includes modal), and reserve 'chromatic' for use in opposition to 'diatonic.'

At the very outset of his big book, Haba makes quite clear the basic differences between the tonal, the atonal, and the polytonal principles, and proceeds to show that despite these differences the three systems may—and, indeed, must—be studied jointly, for they have the same starting-point. Tonality, he says (I am compelled to sum up his principles and conclusions without reproducing his argumentation), is founded on the normal (tonal or modal) scale and its inversions ; polytonality on the same order of scale used in conjunction with its transpositions ; and atonality on the simultaneous

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use of scales whose structure is neither tonal nor modal, and which are not transpositions or inversions of one another.

After having read the first few pages, one realises that this is the biggest and most thoughtful book on harmony since Schönberg's. (I must confess, however, that I write without having compared it with Bruno Weigl's, of which there is much talk in certain German circles.) It commands respect and wonder. It is the kind of book that makes you hold your head in your hands and doubt whether you dare review it before having devoted many months to digesting it and experimenting on the lines it suggests. The subject-matter and the method of treatment are novel. The author proceeds carefully, and his exposition never lacks clarity: but difficulties are increased by the fact that there is no division into chapters and paragraphs—nothing beyond the division into three sections devoted to the diatonic and chromatic system, the quarter-tone system, and the third of a tone system with its subdivisions (sixth and twelfth of a tone), respectively.

A treatise that aims at prefiguring developments rather than at summing up the results of past experiences and experiments is bound to be largely devoted to enumerating possibilities without dividing them into 'right' and 'wrong,' or 'valuable' and 'barren.' Hence, we encounter long—exasperatingly long—strings of examples of what can be done with every kind of scale. The position is that any note may be combined, harmonically or melodically, with any other note, the significance of each particular combination depending upon the function of that combination in the structural logic of the whole. But of course it is this logical function that cannot be predetermined by theory, nor demonstrated except by reference to combinations occurring in a live work of art. This is where every theoretical treatise devoted to untried resources is doomed to fall short. The author of this particular treatise, it is true, thinks otherwise. Indeed, he declares that

... the fundamental shortcoming of harmony teaching is that pupils are taught to use concatenations created by other composers, whereas they ought to be guided solely by their own creative instinct. The object of teaching should be to provide them with the largest possible assortment of available combinations.

This sounds very much as if we were to admit that the best way of teaching the craft of boot-making was to provide apprentices with the largest possible assortment of tools and of pieces of leather; and, for this reason alone, we may safely say that Haba's book may be used as a complement to books that aim at teaching the art of writing, but not as a substitute: it is a dictionary of sorts rather than a grammar.

Let it be remembered, too, that—on the author's own showing—it was written with a special purpose: that of getting his views on quarter-tones and so forth out of his system (this, I hope, is not an unfair way of paraphrasing the words 'aus tonkombinatorischem Übermut'), and of classifying the theory before starting the practice.

Again, let it be said that we are dealing with an earnest and courageous effort, with a thoughtful piece of work which is sure to prove useful even if the qualifications and contradictions which it may suggest turn out to be fully justified. The trouble is that often the reader will feel that it leaves so much unsaid. When the author starts painstakingly

enumerating all possible inversions of every possible scale—including, e.g., the whole-tone scale—and all harmonic combinations to be derived from them, the reader will wonder whether all these combinations really possess a significance varying with the number, order, and pitch of their component notes, or whether, in cases such as that of the whole-tone scale, they do not remain neutral except so far as depends upon their relation to the context. Having been told, once for all, that anything and everything is possible and may be good, why should we be given these long systematic lists, these extensive, but necessarily incomplete, charts of a boundless field?

Coming to quarter-tone music, the author warns us against the danger of considering the quarter-tone scale as the product of two juxtaposed scales in semitones. The quarter-tone scale is a unit. The quarter-tone system admits of tonality, of polytonality, and also of atonality, or, as the author prefers to call it, of 'tone-centrality' (all notes being considered as 'polarised' around a centre). Again, and for a third time in the section devoted to thirds, sixths, and twelfths of a tone, elaborate statistics of possibilities are given. The number of new accidental signs that become needful is terrific: four are enough for the quarter-tone scales, but the scale in twelfths of a tone requires, apparently, twenty-two—of which Haba gives only seventeen, forgoing those that would show the lowering by seven, eight, nine, ten, and eleven twelfths.

After reading through the book, one is tempted to quote the White Knight in 'Alice through the Looking-Glass,' on his latest culinary invention:

I don't believe that pudding ever *was* cooked. In fact, I don't believe it ever *will* be cooked! And yet it was a very clever pudding to invent.

But this piece of frivolity will not meet the case. If we wish to submit the pudding to the traditional proof, there is no impossibility so far at least as quarter-tones are concerned. Mr. Haba has written quite an imposing number of works in the quarter-tone system, and other composers have contributed their quota. I do not know how many examples of the other new types referred to in the book are available, but mention is made of one String Quartet (by Haba) in which sixths of a tone are used. It is by knowing these works and others of the same order that we shall finally test the value of the book under notice. There remains to note that many references are made to the theories and teachings of Skuhersky, Stecker, Novák, and Janáček, who with Haba, and probably a few other Czechs, constitute a distinct and by no means negligible school of theorists. Their contributions do not appear to have attracted due notice outside their native country.

By way of conclusion, I think it just to congratulate the publishers, Messrs. F. Kistner and C. F. W. Siegel, not only for their initiative in bringing out the book, but for ably surmounting the technical difficulties of its production.

M.-D. C.

'Light Opera.' By Sterling Mackinlay.

[Hutchinson, 7s. 6d.]

Mr. Mackinlay has written this book with the intention of making it serve the purpose of a lighthouse, 'raised,' as he says, 'on the rocks of experience.' In many ways the book is true to this purpose, for it throws a good deal of direct light upon the subject. But if the author's notion is to keep young students off the rocks of experience, then he is taking too

optimistic a view of things. The chapter on 'Acting' seems to convey that the actor's art is second nature to the majority of people :

How much can be conveyed by a shrug of the shoulders, half-clenching of a hand, or a slight shifting of posture, while all else is still and the dialogue is spoken with sincerity accompanied by facial expression true to the situation. The raising of an eyebrow, half-closing of the eyes, the curling of the lip, or slow swallowing in the throat will be immensely telling, if steps are taken to draw the gaze of the audience to the character at the crucial moment.

Ah ! but there's the rub. How to take those steps to draw the gaze of the audience ? That is exactly where the art of acting begins, and of course no book can convey its secrets. The eyebrow-raising, lip-curling, lump-swallowing, &c., are the stock-in-trade of every tenth-rate stage- or film-actor.

There are other chapters, more useful than this one, notably those on Dialogue, Conducting, Make-up, Producing, and Amateurs, which are full of good commonsense.

B. M.

'Music : Classical, Romantic, and Modern.' By Egglefield Hull.

[J. M. Dent, 10s. 6d.]

In his introductory chapter, referring to the evolution of music through the succession of great composers who have enriched the art by their creative work, Dr. Hull says :

... we cannot fail to see the spirit of music working to some ultimate fulfilment, using geniuses, periods, and ages to sustain its progress, steadily pursuing, age by age, the working out of its own purpose.

It is this evolutionary creative process that the author takes as his theme, elaborating and explaining it throughout the volume. The book should prove specially valuable to the numberless 'listeners' scattered over the length and breadth of the land, hearing all kinds of music, good, bad, and indifferent, and probably unable, many of them, to classify and discriminate what should be discounted, tolerated, or praised. The fund of information and wide research packed into the book's covers will also appeal to many a student and lover of music.

In Part 1, Dr. Hull passes lightly over the Middle Ages and the Renaissance periods, probably considering they would afford little interest to unskilled listeners. He concentrates his attention on Monteverdi and the two Scarlattis, Lulli, Couperin, Rameau, Purcell, and the great German composers to Beethoven. These are classified in the current phraseology as 'classical.' Part 2 treats of their successors as Romanticists. In the opening chapter of the Romantic period the author admits that the term 'Romanticist' is not easy to define, especially as romantic feelings are not confined to any age or any one particular group of artists. But he does not break away from the traditional nomenclature and treatment which is now meeting with disfavour in so many literary quarters :

The Romanticist [says Dr. Hull] loves the calm of lakes, the grandeur of mountains, the fairness of women, the strength and will of men, the world of little children, . . . the loveliness of flowers and meadows and trees, and all the beauty of the earth.

But is the Classicist to be debarred from loving all these delectable things ? And if so, is it because he wore a wig and stiff garments, was outwardly cased in the conventions of the day, and forced to abide by all manner of stringent rules and regulations ?

The Classicist, Dr. Hull states, 'occupies himself primarily with abstract beauty.' But as the greater contains the less, all the delectable delights of the Romanticists are portions of the inexhaustible sources of abstract beauty. Dr. Hull heads the chapter allotted to Beethoven with the sub-titles : Classical ; Romanticist ; Democrat. Posterity in all probability will do away with all of them ; for music may then be considered as a qualitative continuity, each composer contributing his quota to the whole. At present, however, labels for art and artists seem to be a necessity.

Part 2, entitled 'Romantic,' starts with Berlioz. Weber's birth preceded Berlioz's by seventeen years, but Dr. Hull places the Frenchman first, presumably considering him the figure-head of Romanticism, and being, as he says, the initiator of tone-colour in orchestration. Later, in a chapter on 'Nationality in Music,' he remarks that never was music so nationalised as under the spell of the German Romanticists. And this Teuton alien music dominated other countries. Naturally reaction set in, followed by the individuality of each country reflecting its own nationality. But as a living art music must change and modify continuously, and nationality is for art as narrowing as parochialism for an individual. Therefore atonality, bi-tonality, and polytonality efface frontiers, and gather themselves up into expressionism, an excellent current phrase, since it implies intuition : and intuition, as is well known, that does not objectify itself into expression, remains merely sensation. The bulk of the volume is devoted to the Romantic period extending from the Germans to Chopin, Wagner, the Russians, and the older English composers from Parry to Bax.

Dr. Hull has a resonant mind. Like a musical note and its overtones, one subject sets a score of others vibrating in his thoughts. Mascagni, Leoncavallo, and their operas, lead him to the subject of film music, realism to the reproduction of bird-notes and songs, bell tones, noises.

The chapter on Nationality includes a few pages only on Bartók, and the same on Manuel de Falla. And they are barely mentioned in Part 3, which is wholly devoted to Modern music, and treats very interestingly of all the French composers, Scriabin, Schönberg, Alban Berg, Von Webern, the Italians, Van Dieren, and Hindemith.

In the final chapter of Part 3, treating of the English tradition in music, prominence is given to the delightful 16th-century Cornishman, Giles Farnaby, and tribute is paid to his great melodic gifts and picturesque music, which, as Dr. Hull remarks, loses almost nothing by being transferred to the modern keyboard instrument.

The chapter on Light Opera, Ballet, and Jazz, which is full of information on the lighter side of music, ends with these disconcerting words of Jean Cocteau :

The music-hall, the circus, American negro orchestras, all fertilise an artist to a degree equal to that of life.

Surely most people's experiences of life transcend any of these racketings ! However, one is reassured in Dr. Hull's next chapter on 'The Present and the Future,' for there it is stated that the art of to-day is non-associational and non-representational :

As abstraction is its main concern, the widespread revival in Bach's music is easily understood, for is he not the greatest of all weavers of patterns in sound ?

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A list of technical terms is given at the end of the book, and one of musical forms. There are also biographical notes to composers in alphabetical order, folk-songs and their literature, lists of gramophone records by composers whose work is mentioned, and of musical biographies and studies in English.

Dr. Hull's wide research will help very materially to the spread of what is best in music. Just now it is a matter everywhere more or less of mass production. But it is from the cultured minority that Genius will spring. When he appears he will require no classifying, like so many whose work is recorded in this volume; nor will he need the help of any other arts for a synthesis of expression. More than one historian lately has prophesied his coming. When the time is ripe for his advent he will come as quietly as the dawn; quite gradually, like the sun mounting the horizon, his fame will spread, and sooner or later the world will be glad to acknowledge and acclaim his genius.

L. L.

'Das Judentum in der Musik.' By Heinrich Berl.

[Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt.]

Notices in the German press have described this book as sensational. And certainly it is sensational, after a fashion, at the start, although it ultimately proves rather disappointing.

The author's theses are three in number, all three founded upon the view (whether a mere surmise or a justifiable conclusion is hard to tell) that Judaism stands in modern Western music as a foreign body, as something antagonistic and incompatible. The theses are: (1.) Eastern music is the antithesis of Western; (2.) Jewish music is Eastern; (3.) Jewish influences (whose effects are summed up in the formidable word 'pseudomorphosis') are the primary cause of the Asiatic crisis in contemporary European music.

Why specially Jewish influences rather than all the Asiatic influences which have made themselves felt on European music—e.g., through Russian music—the author does not state convincingly. He is very much under the sway of Paul Bekker's views; and I do not feel sure that his critical faculty equals his imagination. Food for thought he certainly provides: but he does not quite succeed, I fear, in driving his points home.

He selects as his landmarks Bizet, Mahler, and Schönberg. With Mahler and Schönberg begins, he tells us, an era of 'absolute melody' which strongly contrasts with the 'harmonic melody' of the purely European period—a period that ends with Wagner and Pfitzner. This 'absolute melody' carries us back to the pre-European, pre-harmonic period. The Jew, being essentially non-plastic and subjective in his outlook, tends to synthesis and not to analysis: he is therefore essentially musical. At this point, I think, a curious confusion arose in the author's mind: he tells us that the Jew is incapable of objectivating, 'because he sees things in their essence, not in their form.' When Jewish influences began to assert themselves, European music was dying; it is Mahler and Schönberg who recalled it to life. Schönberg is the main exponent of the spirit of the times. Of course all this is extremely controversial, and perhaps prejudiced as well. On p. 91 the assertion crops up that 'it is impossible to conceive the evolution of Russian opera after

Glinka without Rubinstein.' Non-Jewish composers, whose part in contemporary evolution is not small, are not referred to, and the many Jewish composers whose output provides no support for the book's theses are either casually mentioned or overlooked, whereas eight pages are devoted to Erich Wolfgang Korngold. But it is chiefly in the exposition and the arguments, rather than in the attitude adopted towards certain composers, that evidence of prejudice is to be found.

What is needed in order to solve the question of Jewish—or more generally, of non-European— influences on Western music is a kind of counterpart to 'The Golden Bough.' Nothing short of the method and industry of a musically inclined Sir James Frazer will achieve this end.

M.-D. C.

We are often asked for advice on divers points in connection with various examinations. Most of the questions are answered in Arthur H. Fillingham's booklet, 'Guide to the A.R.C.M. and other Examinations in the Art of Pianoforte Teaching' (The Author, 96, Street Lane, Leeds, 2s. 6d.).

Among the papers read before the Musical Association last year was one on 'The Influence of Music from Arabic Sources,' by Henry George Farmer. So exotic a subject, especially when treated with the wealth of erudition at Mr. Farmer's command, is a matter for reader rather than hearer, so the author has done well to issue his paper in pamphlet form (Harold Reeves, 3s. 6d.).

The songs of birds have always attracted musicians, and have in fact been frequently used as bases for composition. A book in which the subject is treated with unusual fullness is Johannes C. Andersen's 'Bird-song and New Zealand Song-birds.' The author has for some years been collecting these native wood-notes wild, and setting them down in musical notation, along with a great deal of natural history lore. The result is a delightful work, with many pictures, and well over a hundred bird-songs and calls (Whitcomb & Tombs, Christchurch, N.Z., 25s.).

'Corrie Voices' consists of twenty-two Gaelic folk-songs collected by Iain Cameron, who supplies the melodies with singable English words 'founded on fragments of old Gaelic songs, and runes sung at the spinning wheel, the loom, the cradle, the wash-tub, and in the fields' (Folk Press, Ranelagh Road, S.W.1).

The Honourable Society of Cymroldorion has issued in pamphlet form a paper from the transactions of the Society, Session 1925-26, on 'Welsh Music in the Tudor Period,' by the Rev. Canon R. E. Roberts (Office of the Society, New Stone Buildings, Chancery Lane).

We have received the 'Year-Book of the Village Drama Society, 1926.' It contains much of interest to Women's Institutes and other rural organizations that have now added dramatic production to their activities (The Hon. Secretary, 15, Peckham Road, S.E.5, 6d.).

A delightful little book is 'Cantabile: Songs and Poems,' by John Caldwell-Johnston. The author has an unusual gift for poetic treatment of subjects drawn from the English countryside (East & West, Ltd., Victoria Street, S.W.1, 5s.).

BOOKS RECEIVED

[Mention in this list neither implies nor precludes review in a future issue.]

'Church Music Reform.' By John Newton. Pp. 43. Cambridge: W. Heffer, 1s.

'Thomas Whythorne. An Unknown Elizabethan Composer.' By Peter Warlock. Pp. 11. Oxford University Press, 4d.

'Borodin: The Man and His Music.' By Gerald E. H. Abraham. Pp. 205. William Reeves, 6s.

'Roll of the Union of Graduates in Music, 1927.' Pp. 110. Murdoch, 3s.

'Musikalische Gedichte.' By Richard Plattensteiner. Pp. 62. Dresden: Heinrich Minden-Verlag.

'Long-Haired Iopas: Old Chapters from twenty-five years of Music Criticism.' By Edward Prime-Stevenson. Pp. 426. The Author, The Italian Press, Florence, Italy.

'Methodist Music of the 18th Century.' By James T. Lightwood. Pp. 56. Epworth Press, 1s.

'England's Book of Praise.' By John Telford. Pp. 160. Epworth Press, 2s. 6d.

'Finland, V.: Fine Arts and Literature.' Pp. 67. From the Finnish Legation, 2, Moreton Gardens, S.W.5.

'The Appeal of Jazz.' By R. W. S. Mendl. Pp. 187. Philip Allan, 6s.

New Music

UNISON SONGS

A happy little booklet is that containing 'School Songs from the Hebrides' (Paterson). Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser and Kenneth Macleod have put together a dozen of these strong tunes, several of them not very well-known, but all fresh—airy and comely. I am glad to see the delicious, lilt 'Potato-liftin'' song among them ('On your feetiken, my dear, Ye'll potato-liftin' try').

Ernest Austin's 'Weave a crown for England' is a bold march, conventional but with pleasantly-phrased words (Larway).

From Novello's comes Rathbone's 'Little White Lily,' an expressive setting of George MacDonald's pretty words. Girls specially would like this. An arrangement of Sullivan's 'Willow Song' would suit the older children. With this is given another song, Sharman's simple, bright 'The Postman'—a song that quite small people can sing.

I perceive that last month, in speaking of Cramer's re-issue of some of the 'English County Songs,' I said that the airs go only up to 'middle C.' This was, of course, a slip. I meant the C in the middle of the treble staff.

PART-SONGS FOR CHILDREN'S AND FEMALE VOICES

Dr. Sweeting's 'The Piper' (P. Chalmers's words) is slowish and graceful. Nicely managed flowing curves are wanted. This is for two voices—lower, down to C; upper, up to G (Oxford University Press). 'Four Mediæval Songs' come from the same firm. These are by W. H. Bell, once a professor at the R.A.M., and now for some years the occupant of the Chair of Music at the University of Cape Town. They are for s.s.c. and (originally)

strings with pianoforte. (The score and parts may be hired.) A pianoforte reduction, complete in itself, is here provided. The four songs are entitled 'Hymn to the Virgin,' 'The Maiden that is makeles,' 'Mater ora filium,' and 'The Flower of Jesse.' The idiom has the appropriate modal flavour without being painstakingly archaic, and the writing is quite straightforward. The addition of strings would much enhance the effect, I feel sure.

Another of Ernest Austin's modest efforts is 'The Rainbow Fairies' (s.s.; only one verse out of four is in two parts). This composer might dig a bit deeper with advantage. I see he is at Op. 80, No. 11. His facility is his most notable quality (Larway).

From Novello's comes a welcome arrangement of Elgar's 'As torrents in summer,' for s.s.c. (the composer's own re-scoring).

The Oxford University Press begins what I hope may be a work of some extent in issuing five of Handel's operatic choruses, arranged and scored by Sir Henry Wood. Only one (No. 5) is for female voices. This is 'Now cometh May,' from 'Rinaldo' (s.s.c.). The pianoforte part provided will of course be used by most choral bodies, or it could be adapted to the organ. The orchestral score and parts can be hired. We may guess that the scoring is powerful, and at times distinctly gay, for Sir Henry has a neat hand with the brush, and loves to lay on bold colours when the music allows it. This May piece is a flowing, sunshiny six-eighter.

Novello's have now issued the last of the seven songs for s.s.c. and strings, by Holst. The first six were reviewed in the January issue. No. 7 is a setting of 'Assemble all ye maidens' (Bridges), described as an 'elegy on a lady whom grief for the death of her betrothed killed.' A number of solo soprano passages, *sensa misura*, with a sustained note or simple chord for accompaniment, give a fine sense of breadth and dignity, and sustain the narrative so that the piece does not flag. A ground bass forms a notable feature of the choral part, and we have again the clever, free use of five-four time that Holst almost alone employs with perfect effectiveness. The songs, by the way, are dedicated to Frank Duckworth, who first performed the early 'Rig Veda' Hymns. We hope for more such music from Holst. His austerity has sometimes seemed to me coldness, but in such a song as this it is employed to a noble end.

MIXED VOICES

Tallis's 'When shall my sorrowful sighing slake?' has been edited for the Oxford University Press 'Old Masters' series by Bernard Jackson. This is a simple and, in its quiet way, pathetic setting. No two-stave compression of the S.A.T.B. parts is given. Would-be A.R.C.O. score-readers can use this as a test (the parts cross).

The first four of the new Handel choruses that the Oxford University Press is printing (No. 5 is noticed under Female-Voice pieces above) are: 'Crown him ruler' (from 'Lotharius'); 'The Foolish Lover' ('Deidamia'); 'Hark, how the woods' ('Atalanta'); and 'The heart that's contented' ('Admetus'). These are all for S.A.T.B. and orchestra (or pianoforte). The first is simple, solid, almost hymn-tune-like. The second gives jovial advice to lovers, *ff* and *ff*; by all means, but neither ponderous nor puffy be. The third, a holiday roundelay, must be 'gay and bright' too—

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loud, yet light. The last has a nice simple-mindedness about it, though the music is not of the first importance. We want more Handel. There are hundreds of fine things—solos and choruses—exceedingly well worth digging out of the operas and oratorios. Let us have a good supply of these, selected with rigorous taste, and properly edited. Who will follow this capital lead?

W. R. A.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Ernest Bloch is no new-comer in the field of chamber music. Yet it would be impossible to say honestly that the more we are together the happier we shall be. When first you meet Mr. Bloch you are mildly surprised at the unusual display of colour-schemes and mildly interested in the way in which they are exploited. Closer acquaintance, however, does not deepen either the surprise or interest. The Pianoforte Trios (three Nocturnes) and String Quartets ('Paysages' and 'Night') sent by E. W. Organ, of Birmingham, are so very similar in texture and aim that one can but wonder whether the composer believes that this anxious search for colour is the final goal of musical composition. There is no gainsaying the obvious fact that the average audience of the present day likes everything well seasoned. Curry powder and cayenne pepper are the fashionable ingredients of every dish. But surely there should be some discrimination. It is right for the jazz band composer to invent new mutes for trombones and to ask his merry interpreters to add the shouts, screams, groans, and every other noise which men can produce to the screaming and the groaning of his orchestral instruments. He delights to bark and bite because it is his nature to. But should it also be the nature of the composer of chamber music? Even if we admit that the tendency of the moment is in that direction, is there no nook or cave where a thoughtful composer—not necessarily a reactionary—can think or work out his ideas in peace? If such a place exists, it is certain that Ernest Bloch has not found it. It is all very well to suggest that impressionistic music is not expected to do more than 'impress' and stimulate the imagination. Our imagination feels the stimulus of the fanfare in Debussy's 'Nuages et Fêtes' or of Delius's 'On hearing the first Cuckoo in Spring' because these composers with uncanny skill have connected their music and their subject. But it is difficult to feel any connection between the uneasy, tormented harmonies of Ernest Bloch and his themes—be they landscape or the great silences of night. To us these are mere pieces of machinery lying inert for lack of the only fuel which can set them in motion, and we turn with a feeling of relief to the 'Variations on an Original Theme,' by F. Purcell Warren (Cramer), for string quartet, not because this is great music, but because it does not pretend to be any other than it is—a straightforward exercise in variations based on a good tune offering moderate difficulties to the performer and none whatever to the listener.

B. V.

ORGAN MUSIC

The issue of a new batch of pieces by Louis Vierne is something of an event. The fact of the set consisting of twenty-four numbers recalls the delightful collection of 'Pieces in Free Style' that made so many friends for the composer. His new work is called 'Pièces de Fantaisie,' and is to appear in four Suites.

So far, only the first has been issued; the remainder are to be spread over the present year. Players of modest abilities, with small organs, will be sorry to find that Vierne does not cater for them here as he did in the earlier two-stave set. The 'Pièces de Fantaisie' are designed for a three-manual organ; they have an obbligato pedal; and are decidedly difficult—not so much in regard to technique as in the mental effort demanded by the bizarre harmony and almost incessant chromaticism. Vierne is surely overdoing this latter feature; one longs for a spell of straightforward progressions as a relief from the strings of crawling dissonances. The set opens with a typically modern French Prélude, with a simple pedal tune under broken chords. There are some beautiful touches in the Andantino that follows—the easiest piece in the set; the Caprice calls for good playing, both with hands and feet, and is perhaps worth the considerable trouble; the Intermezzo recalls the delightful Scherzetto of the earlier set of pieces, but is less spontaneous; 'Requiem Aeternam' opens with sombre effect, and promises well, but a wearisome stretch of slithering discords midway lowers the standard. The best piece of the set is the concluding 'Marche Nuptiale.' Its bold, diatonic discords would tell splendidly in a big building; an over-chromatic section lets the piece down somewhat, but it recovers its opening boldness and makes a finely sonorous ending. This is the Vierne of the 'Carillon,' and it is to be hoped that the remaining 'Pièces de Fantaisie' will show us more of him. Much of the later Vierne is very little better than Spohr gone sour.

Henri Dallier's 'Five Invocations' are on more ordinary lines, the writing being suave and the difficulties moderate. The pieces have ecclesiastical titles—'Stella matutina,' 'O clemens! O pia!' and so on—but any plainsong thematic bases that may be present are not obvious, so probably the connection is rather with the mood of the text. The music is always pleasing, attractive, and well written, though somewhat lacking in originality at times; and the length is generally a little greater than the interest of the work will bear, chiefly because of some rather conventional bridge-passages. These Vierne and Dallier works are published by Lemoine, Paris (Novello).

Percy E. Fletcher's 'Festal Offertorium' makes a very considerable effect, with little trouble to the player. The scheme is one that rarely fails when the organ is the medium—the giving-out, phrase by phrase in alternation with a quick motive from the opening subject, of a broad, chorale-like theme, slightly modal in character; and its subsequent use, full organ, as the chief constituent of the final pages. It is a pity Mr. Fletcher overworks the rather trite harmony of his opening bar; those of us who dislike the diminished seventh used in this way have rather a bad time, as it makes seven appearances—which is just seven too many. Mr. Fletcher's other piece, 'Matinale,' belongs to the large family of popular recital pieces in which a tune is soloed with repeated chord accompaniment.

It is surprising that the popular Colin melody sung to the hymn 'Ye watchers and ye holy ones' has not long ago been made the basis of an organ piece. Apparently William Faulkes is the first to think of it, the result being a Festal Postlude, entitled 'Alleluia,' rather easy to play, and decidedly attractive. True, it does not rise to the height of its fine theme, but within its modest range it is successful. Stronger

development would have made it better. The suggestion of bells against the theme at the end is happy.

Benedict's Variations on Arne's 'Where the bee sucks' have been arranged by Chastey Hector. They belong to the decorative and somewhat superficial type of variation, and so lend themselves well to the concert organ. Neat playing is necessary. The above pieces come from Novello.

Cramer's send some recent additions to their Library of organ music by British composers. J. B. Rooper's 'Prelude on Two Christmas Carols' consists of the use in combination of 'The first Nowell' and 'A Virgin Unspotted.' The conventions of part-writing are strained in the process, and a touch of the mechanical is produced by the composer repeating his feat of joinery. L. Henniker's Prologue is effective and sonorous, though its material is not fresh. Godfrey Scats's 'Carillon' contains some piquant effects, and is off the usual track of such pieces—a successful little recital item of no great difficulty. By far the best piece of organ music that has come my way for a long time is Heathcote D. Statham's Rhapsody in C. Here is a composer who can strike a note of his own and keep it up. The piece fills eleven pages and never hangs fire; the harmonic idiom is bold; and there are few modulations. Why modulate when it is easy to step from one key to another, no matter how unrelated? In a sense, of course, it is easy; the difficulty is to make it seem natural, and to avoid being scrappy. Dr. Statham is entirely successful here, and he overcomes a similar problem in his rhythmic scheme, using in a perfectly natural way a mixture of bar-lengths in which 7-4 and 5-4 predominate. There is plenty of power-contrast, though the registration is not fussy. The Rhapsody is not forbiddingly difficult; but the player must be able to handle strong—often rough—progressions in the right bold, unhesitating manner; and he must have a good sense of rhythm. Significantly, the composer indicates that the playing is to be 'in strict time, without *rubato*.' We know but too well what some players will consider justifiable when faced with a rhapsodical work in irregular time. I hope Dr. Statham will let us have more organ music of this virile and bracing quality.

Paxton's have just issued C. Charlton Palmer's Overture in A minor, written specially as a voluntary for the Gloucester Festival of 1925. Here we have good writing and laying-out, and therefore the music 'comes off.' The main theme is animated and well treated; it is a pity the second subject fails to maintain the interest. The piece is only moderately difficult. J. A. Meale's Variations on a Theme of Mozart's ('La dove prende,' from 'The Magic Flute') are unpretentious, effective, and in keeping. Hugh Blair's 'Exultate!' is a straightforward postlude that would have been more interesting had the composer given us less tonic harmony.

Percy Buck's two Christmas Preludes ('The Holly and the Ivy' and 'The first Nowell') are old favourites of a good many of us. They have now been re-issued by the Year-Book Press, which has also acquired Dr. Buck's 'Marche Militaire,' another early work. From the same house comes a Chorale Prelude on Tallis's Canon, by C. S. Lang—a modest essay in a familiar method, the tune being given to a solo stop against flowing counterpoint.

There is general agreement as to the necessity for re-editing Rheinberger's Organ Sonatas. Apparently Forberg's, of Leipsic (Novello), have made a start,

entrusting the work to Karl Hoyer, whose efforts, if we may judge from his treatment of the 'Pastoral' Sonata, are not likely to commend themselves to most English players of these sterling works. He is far too restless, breaking up the flowing first movement by numerous changes of manual. Not only is the method contrary to the spirit of the music; it also adds greatly to the difficulty—e.g., this fussy soloing of the single note in the R.H. makes the L.H. part awkward if the right pace is to be maintained:

(These quick D's sound like the 'pips' of the radio time signal!) Moreover, Mr. Hoyer goes clean against the composer's intention (and the style of the movement) by adopting too quiet a treatment. No doubt the original *ff* indication needs some modification, but the other extreme is out of place, as is shown when we reach the broad *Grave* chordal passage at the close, which Mr. Hoyer marks *pp*. There are a few unnecessary and awkward manual changes in the Fugue—a movement which surely demands little more than clean, lively playing; and the drop to *mf* in the middle of the final page is a bad anti-climax. Mr. Hoyer would have been better employed in adding some fingering and footing marks. I look forward to his treatment of other Sonatas with some interest and considerable anxiety. Rheinberger's organ music, like Bach's, is of an architectural, polyphonic, all-through type that calls for fine phrasing, rhythm, clearness, and continuity. Over-much registration is apt to interfere with these qualities, especially the last.

H. G.

CHURCH MUSIC

Two Motets by Thomas Tallis, with Latin text, have been edited by H. B. Collins (Chester). 'In jejunio et fletu' is suitable for Lent and other penitential seasons. Originally written for treble, two tenors, and two basses, an alto part has been arranged by the Editor for use when this voice is available. Nothing has been added to the music, the alto part merely doubling either the treble or the first tenor. It is an expressive work of no great difficulty; the counterpoint is nowhere elaborate, and there is a fair amount of harmonic writing. 'Salvator Mundi' (second setting) is for Lent and Passontide, Holy Cross Day, and for general use. It is a beautiful little work, in contrapuntal style, for five voices (second tenor or baritone). It contains several curious clashes between A flat and A natural, concerning the treatment of which the Editor makes suggestions.

From the Oxford University Press come three new numbers of the Oxford Series of Modern Anthems, edited by E. Stanley Roper. Percy W. Whitlock's Motet 'Glorious in Heaven' is for Saints' Days use. It is a well-written work in diatonic style for five voices (S.A.T.B.B.), with optional accompaniment. The counterpoint is of a straightforward, easily flowing type, and should sound effective. W. G. Alcock's

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anthem, 'When thou turnest away from ill,' is a thoughtful and musicianly setting for four voices and organ of some words by George Macdonald. Without being in any way pretentious, there is much that is interesting and distinctive both in the vocal writing and in the treatment generally. The work calls for expressive singing and, while not difficult, provides ample opportunities for a good choir. Those who are acquainted with the writings of Herbert Howells might be interested in examining his setting of 'When first thine eies unveil'—words by Henry Vaughan. This is No. 1 of three Motets, and is for solo tenor (or treble), chorus, and organ. The writing is of an extremely dissonant character, and much of it on first acquaintance seems—to the present writer, at any rate—intolerably ugly. Greater familiarity might possibly modify first impressions; meanwhile, organists cannot do better than study the work themselves.

Far more likely to appeal to the average Church choir are three anthems by Henry G. Ley. These are the second, third, and fourth of Six Short Anthems for the Seasons of the Church. 'Lo, round the Throne a glorious band,' for Saints' Days, is an arrangement of a melody by N. Herman, 1560. This old Dorian tune is first sung in unison with free organ accompaniment. The second verse is for sopranos alone; in the next the melody is sung by tenors and basses, beneath a treble descant; the following verse is for unaccompanied full choir, with the tune in the bass; and the last is for full choir and organ, concluding with an imposing Amen. 'Come, Thou Holy Spirit, come'—for Whitsuntide or Ember Days—is an arrangement of an old German melody. Another version of the words—'Come, Thou Holy Paraclete'—is also given. This setting is for unaccompanied singing, and the arrangement is excellent and well varied. Thus in the second verse the tune is sung by tenors and basses, and two free parts are added above by first and second sopranos. In another verse the lower alternate with the upper voices in three-part harmony. The last of these Anthems is an original setting of words by J. W. Chadwick—'Eternal Ruler'—for Trinity Sunday. The composer has written a strong, dignified tune, and has treated it in various ways, as in the other settings. There is a misprint in the alto part on page 4, line 3, bar 4. This admirable series of short anthems should be noted by choirmasters.

Many admirers of the late Charles Wood's writings for the Church will welcome the appearance of a new setting of the Communion Service—'Missa Sancti Patricii' (Faith Press). It includes both forms of the Kyrie, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei, Pater noster, and Gloria in Excelsis. The setting—which, though mainly contrapuntal in style, is not difficult—should appeal particularly to those already familiar with the works of the 16th-century polyphonic school.

G. G.

Verdi's 'Requiem' was excellently performed by the Croydon Philharmonic Society on May 7. The soloists were Miss Dorothy Silk, Miss Margaret Balfour, Mr. William Heseltine, and Mr. Harold Williams. Choir and orchestra numbered nearly two hundred. Mr. W. H. Reed led the orchestra, and Mr. Alan J. Kirby conducted.

Croydon held its fifteenth annual Competition Festival on May 2-7. Entries totalled a thousand six hundred and twenty—a considerable increase on last year's record. The Daily Telegraph Shield was won by the Lyons' Club Choral Society, Cadby Hall. The final prize-giving concert drew large crowds.

Gramophone Notes

By 'DISCUS'

COLUMBIA

We get off the beaten track with fine results in a record of an extract from 'The Apostles'—the section entitled, 'By the Wayside.' The performers are Dora Labette, Harold Williams, Hubert Eisdell, Dennis Noble, Robert Easton, and the Hallé Chorus, with orchestra, conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty. The blend of soloists, chorus, and orchestra is unusually good, though the orchestra is a little too much in the background. The diction of the soloists (especially of Mr. Harold Williams) is remarkably clear. The success of this extract from a noble and still too little known work is full of rich promise (L1068).

The reproduction of vocal ensemble is making great strides. Last month I noted some exciting operatic choral records. Here is another—'Brindisi,' from Verdi's 'Otello,' sung by Stabile, Venturini, and Nessie, with the chorus of La Scala, Milan. For vivid power this would be hard to equal. Its companion piece is the 'Te Deum' episode from 'La Tosca,' in which Stabile is the soloist. Here again the choral and instrumental ensemble is remarkably good. What fine voices these male chorus singers have! (L1069).

Milder fare of the same kind is the chorus of Cigarette Girls from 'Carmen'; and an extract from 'Lombardi,' the chorus being again that of La Scala (D1568).

Chamber music goes back to Mozart with an admirable recording of one of his most popular Quartets—that in D minor—played by the Léner Quartet. All the same, I cannot but regret that choice fell on a work that has already been recorded twice. There are still some exquisite Quartets of Mozart's for which gramophonists are waiting (L1065-67).

In the way of light music there is a record of Jean Lensen and his orchestra playing Blockx's Serenade 'Milenka,' and Rubinstein's 'Toreador' and 'Andalouse' (4293).

Organ records still run too much to arrangement, or draw on the feeble type of organ music—a pity, the players being usually so good. W. Steff-Langston gives us Coleridge-Taylor's Intermezzo in C and Brahms's 'Hungarian Dance' No. 5, playing the latter far too quickly for effect (4319); also a dreadful 'Poem,' by Fibich, along with the capital Triumphal March from Grieg's 'Sigurd Jorsafar' (4320). Mr. Steff-Langston is over-fond of the tremulant—a device which hinders clear recording. He plays a 'Christie Unit' organ at a Wimbledon Cinema called the 'Elite Super': why not add 'Crème de la Crème'?

Quentin Maclean's performance of the 'Poet and Peasant' Overture, on the organ at Shepherd's Bush Pavilion, is so admirable in registration that much of this record might pass for that of an orchestra. Clarity and neatness are above the average. The sooner Mr. Maclean is allowed to record some first-rate organ music the better (4318).

I have so often complained about the erratic rhythm and other eccentricities of male-voice quartets, that it is a pleasure to praise one. The Salisbury Singers give us some delightful singing in Sullivan's 'O hush thee, my babie' and German's 'O Peaceful Night' (4298).

The Sheffield Choir, conducted by Dr. Coward, sings Pinsuti's feeble 'In this hour of softened splendour,' and the old jest, 'Italian Salad.' A capital feature in the latter is the solo work of Stanley Beckett (9194).

Puccini's last work, 'Turandot,' has a success of curiosity. Those who wish for samples of it will find some well served up in 'Nessun dorma' and 'Non piangere lui,' sung by Francesco Merli (D1571); and the duet, 'In questa reggia,' wherein Merli is joined by Bianca Scacciati (D1570). Other vocal solo records are of John O'Sullivan in a couple of extracts from 'Trovatore' (D1573); Gertrude Johnson in the Waltz Song from 'Romeo and Juliet' and the Jewel Song from 'Faust' (9193); and W. F. Watt, who sings Dunhill's 'Fiddler of Dooney' (not quite so well as usual in the rapid passages) and an Irish song, 'The lark of the clear air' (4296).

H.M.V.

The records of the 'William Tell' Overture, conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent, make us wonder why the gramophone knows so little of this brilliant conductor. The Overture is a first-rate bit of work, beautifully clear. My only grumble is on the score of its being recorded on four 10-in. sides (by no means full), with somewhat scrappy results. The orchestra is that of Covent Garden (B2437-38).

Another good bit of recording is of the Prelude to Act 3 of 'The Mastersingers,' played by the London Symphony Orchestra, under Albert Coates (D1219).

A new-comer is Alfredo Rode, a violinist. Unfortunately he elects to be heard in a couple of showy futilities—Bazzini's 'Dance of the Goblins' and Paganini's 'La Clochette.' His dexterity is evident, but as the works apparently give no scope for any other quality most of us will prefer to hear him in some real music before 'placing' him (B2436).

What Casals does in transcriptions of 'The Prize Song' and 'O Star of Eve' may be imagined. Still, I wish he had dropped on some Wagnerian song other than 'O Star of Eve,' a good portion of which is recitative rather than air, and even with the aid of words is not very interesting. 'The Prize Song' is another affair, and is admirably suited to the instrument (DB1012).

Arthur de Greef has usually been recorded in concertos, if I remember rightly. It is good to hear him recorded in Chopin's 'Funeral March' Sonata. Tone is good, and there is little, if any, over-hitting. Indeed, we could do with a little more climax here and there, especially in the Funeral March (D1220-22).

Organ-recording somewhat above the average (which is a good deal lower than the various bulletins would have us believe) is heard in the Toccata of Dubois and d'Evry's 'Meditation,' played by Herbert Dawson on St. Margaret's, Westminster, organ (C1321). The figuration in the Toccata is creditably clear, but the power in the climaxes is inadequate. Meanwhile, almost every organ record I hear leaves me wondering how long we are to wait before the choice of music in this department equals that in other instrumental fields. The orchestral equivalent of most of the organ works recorded would be mere restaurant or *salon* music. There is no lack of fine organ stuff apart from that of Bach, and the sooner our admirable players and instruments are recorded in music worthy of them the better. At the present rate of progress the général public will form a very poor conception of the organ repertory.

The mid-May list contains some excellent records. The Berlin State Orchestra, conducted by Leo Blech, is heard in sparkling performances of the Overtures to 'Figaro' and 'Cosi fan tutte' (D1224).

The same performers join forces with that fine baritone, Alexander Kipnis, in 'Wotan's Farewell' (D1225)—a very vivid bit of work.

An unusually good violin record is that of Isolde Menges playing Hubay's 'Hejre Kati,' and the 'Meditation' from 'Thaïs' (D1223).

The choral recordings are of St. John's College Chapel Choir, Cambridge (with string quartet), in Byrd's 'Have mercy upon me' (B2448); and New College Chapel Choir, Oxford—Farrant's 'Lord, for Thy tender mercies' sake' and Wesley's 'O Lord, my God' (B2446). The Byrd is noble stuff, but the record does less than justice to the lower voices—apparently owing to the liberal echo; the boys soar out beautifully. The string quartet is a great improvement on the organ as an accompanying force—at all events, in the present stage of organ recording. The Farrant and Wesley anthems seem to be sung with too little *sostenuto*: the effect is almost mincing at times. Perhaps there is too little echo here, though one gets an impression that the choir is over-syllabic in diction, and unduly conscientious in regard to commas, especially in the Farrant.

There are a couple of vocal solo records—a good one of Elisabeth Schumann in a pair of 'Figaro' songs—'Venne, ingiocchiatevi' and 'Non so più' (DA844); and an all too successful reproduction of tenor singing at its sloppiest in Gigli's performance of Drigo's 'Love's Nocturne' and Toselli's 'Serenade.' The latter record will no doubt be popular (DB1002).

Fine manly singing is that of Fernand Ansseau in two extracts from Gounod's 'Romeo and Juliet'—'Ah ! lève-toi, soleil !' and 'Salut ! tombeau sombre et silencieux' (DB951).

Maria Jeritza is recorded in 'Wie nahte mir der Schlummer' and 'Alles pflegt schon längst der Ruh,' from 'Der Freischütz.' Either the gramophone lies, or Madame sings badly out of tune (DB982).

Of peculiar interest are a couple of organ records, the instrument being the Liverpool Cathedral mammoth, played by Harry Goss-Custard. Karg-Elert's 'La Nuit' and Bairstow's 'Evening Song' both suffer from lack of clearness, especially the former. But the organ tone is exceptionally well reproduced (C1325). The other record is of Lemmens's 'Storm.' Here the confusion in some of the climaxes merely adds to the realism, and the effect is certainly exciting. For sheer volume of genuine organ tone this is the best record known to me. At one point a mighty pedal reed is heard with richly satisfying results (C1324).

VOCALION

Putting aside some fox-trots and revue items, there are few records calling for notice. An addition to 'The Gondoliers' series is a record of John Buckley singing 'No possible doubt whatever,' and Cavan O'Connor in 'Take a pair of sparkling eyes' (X9995). John Thorne is heard in 'Glorious Devon' and 'Four jolly Sailormen'—not nearly jolly enough in the latter, in spite of what appears to be an imitation of the tone-colour used by John Goss when singing shanties (X9996).

(Continued on page 533.)

Words by J. W. CHADWICK

Music by Eric H. Timan

UNISON HYMN-ANTHEM FOR MASSED VOICES

LONDON: NOVELLO AND COMPANY, LIMITED; NEW YORK: THE H. W. GRAY CO., SOLE AGENTS FOR THE U.S.A.

Risoluto

VOICES

ORGAN

ALL VOICES *f*

E - ter - nal

Risoluto. d=about 84

sf

f

Ped.

Ru - ler of the cease - less round Of cir - cling plan - ets sing - ing on their

way; Guide of the na - tions from the night profound In - to the glo -

ry of the per - fect day; Rule in our hearts, that we may ev - er

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be Guid - ed and strengthen'd and up - held by Thee.

SOPRANOS AND CONTRALTO

mf

We are of Thee, the chil-dren of Thy love, The bro-thers of Thy

mf

well - be-lov-ed Son; De-scend, O Ho - ly Spi - rit, like a dove, In - to our

cres.

hearts, that we may be as one: As one with Thee, to

cres.

whom we ev - er tend; As one with Him, our.. Bro - ther and our Friend.

Ped.

MEN'S VOICES

We would be one in ha - ted of all wrong, . . . One in our love of
poco stacc.

all things sweet and fair, One with the joy that breaketh in - to song, One with the
poco dim.

grief . . . that trem-bles in - to prayer, One in the power that makes the children
cres.

free To fol-low truth, and thus to fol - low Thee.
poco rall. *poco meno mosso*

poco meno mosso
poco rall.

ALL VOICES *maestoso*

O clothe us with Thy heav'nly armour, Lord, Thy

maestoso

trus - ty shield, Thy sword of love di - vine; Our in - spi - ra - tion be Thy con - stant

word; We ask no vic - t'ries that are... not... Thine: Give or with -

- hold, let pain or plea - sure be; E - nough to know that we are

SOPRANOS AND ALTO斯
poco rall.

serv - ing Thee.

TENORS AND BASSES
poco rall.

rall.

A - - men.

Broader to the end

(Continued from page 528)

The pianoforte recording of this Company is usually first-rate, and its high standard is maintained in a record of Schumann's 'Träumes-wirren' and Rubinstein's Staccato Study, Op. 23, No. 2 (abridged), played by Sapellnikov with admirable crispness (A9270).

The only orchestral record is of the 'Freischütz' Overture, capably played by the Festival Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Adrian Boult.

Player-Piano Notes

ÆOLIAN

Duo-Art.—A consignment of fourteen complete Beethoven Pianoforte Sonatas has just arrived, played by various artists. It is not possible to review them in detail, but after hearing them all at a sitting or two the point that strikes one most is the amazing vitality and freshness of the music. Apart from occasional concert performances of certain of the later Sonatas, one hears only more or less inadequate attempts at the less difficult examples by students in various stages of development, and one's appreciation is apt to suffer. Here, however, we have performances by such artists as Myra Hess, Lamond, Murdoch, Fryer, Iturbi, &c. Some of the earlier Sonatas that have perhaps come to be regarded as rather below Beethoven's standard are really delightful. No better tonic can be prescribed for the jaded musician than a good spell of listening to these rolls.

Admirers of Cortot's playing will welcome his performance of Liszt's 'Rhapsodie Hongroise' No. 2 (3099). It is, if anything, a little too suave; a rougher note in places would have been acceptable.

A spirited conception of Schumann's Intermezzo ('Viennese Carnival Pranks') is given by Irene Scharrer (7049).

That dainty pianist, Geneviève Pitot, plays us another pleasant inconsequential piece, 'Valse Petite,' by Gustav Benkhart (7046), and though, as the catalogue has it, the music 'may make no great call on the intellect,' a little of it in this style is charming.

There is another capital roll of the Tchaikovsky 'Pathetic' Symphony, arranged and played by Albert Stoessel—the second movement, Allegro con Grazia (511).

'The Vagabond King' selection (6976) by Friml, played by Robert Armbruster, is a bit above the general run of musical plays and is moderately entertaining. Cheerful but commonplace is Pryor's 'The Whistler and his Dog' Caprice. It receives an adequate performance by Henri Bergman (7087).

Hand-played.—Bach's Chorale Prelude on the German form of 'Veni Creator,' arranged by Busoni, is finely played by Myra Hess (A981c). It is, however, essentially organ music, and not only do we miss the sustained tone in a pianoforte transcription, but when the tune is given to the bass in the second half, the left-hand octaves are a very poor substitute for the organ pedals.

It is a pleasant surprise to find Harold Bauer giving a performance of Durand's 'Valse' in E flat. This is a good Waltz, and (it is hardly necessary to add) well played (A985c).

Mark Hambourg's performance of Rubinstein's 'Bohème Polka' suffers from some unclear rhythm at the start (A983d).

Metrostyle.—The only two rolls of real interest to the musician are those of the first and second movements of Beethoven's Sonata in E flat, Op. 81a (T3029a and T3029c). With the exception of the last few bars of the first movement (in which the rhythm of the groups of quavers is not distinct) these are very good, and not at all difficult to manage.

BLÜTHNER

Animatic.—Here we have a varied choice of works, with a very high standard of playing throughout. In some of the more complicated music the pedal needs careful manipulation. Especially is this the case in the Max Reger Prelude and Fugue, Op. 49, No. 6. The performance is that of the composer himself; his pedalling is a clever piece of work, but only a skilful player-pianist will be able to follow the rapid markings with satisfactory results. The average player should ensure clarity by not attempting too much with the pedal (55578).

Easier to manage and understand, and in direct contrast to the complex beauty of the Prelude and Fugue, is 'Silhouette,' by the same composer (55579). It is good, though its richness cloyes somewhat.

The clear, pearly runs of Carl Reinecke playing his own 'Nocturne,' Op. 157, No. 1, are good to hear. Though light and pleasant, the music is on the sentimental side, and the repetition of the opening phrase is apt to become monotonous (55587).

There are two Debussy Preludes (Nos. 4 and 6), played by Sulzberger (55826); here again the pedal needs much attention. This is not Debussy at his most attractive, but the pieces grow on one, especially the plaintive No. 6.

The 'Variations on a German Theme in E,' by Chopin, are pleasant but not very interesting. With the exception of the beautiful Variation in the minor, the work shows Chopin below his form. Anton Rohden's performance is all that could be desired (59387).

For Beethoven enthusiasts there is a virile and understanding performance by Felix Wernow of Nos. 1-3 of the Op. 126 set of 'Bagatelles' (58407).

Though Rubinstein's 'Valse Caprice' still retains some of its charm, there is overmuch repetition for these hurried days. Francis Plante, who plays it, keeps the rhythm going well all through, and does not succumb to the general tendency to sentimentalise this style of music (57270).

There is plenty of good tone-contrast in Margaret Isenberg's playing of Schütt's 'Pizzicato-Valse'; her touch is light but firm (52098).

It is noticeable that all the composers who play their own works in this list have been judicious in their use of *rubato*. Here is Wieniawski, with a delightful performance of his own charming 'Berceuse'—sympathy without sentiment (T54215). Hofmann gives us yet another proof of his wonderful technique in Liszt's arrangement of the 'Tannhäuser' Overture (50751). It is a fine roll, though it demonstrates the impossibility of reproducing certain string effects on the pianoforte.

Ordinary.—The most interesting of the three received is Arensky's 'Intermezzo' from 'Morceaux caractéristiques,' Op. 36; it has a well-varied rhythm, and is very well cut (55604). Pleasant but commonplace are Grünfeld's 'Serenade,' in which some delicate effects in the rapid passages can be obtained (56378), and Elgar's 'Meditation,' Op. 20 (55894).

D. G.

Occasional Notes

Mr. Sydney Nicholson's plea for a 'School for Choirmasters' (in an article in *The Times* of April 30) deserves sympathetic consideration at the hands of all who are concerned in the future of parish church music. Briefly, the scheme (which, he says, has been worked out in some detail) aims at the establishment of a training centre at which the prospective organist could obtain experience in training and accompanying a church choir; familiarise himself with the finest Church music of all styles and periods; and obtain a knowledge of the liturgical principles that in a well-ordered service must govern the choice and performance of the music:

The aim would be to train students not only as competent organists and choirmasters, but also as keen and educated churchmen; and in order to accomplish this the equipment must include a chapel and a resident hostel, with a warden or director, a chaplain, and a staff of choirboys, of a type similar to those available in ordinary churches. Students would pursue their ordinary studies at one of the recognised schools of music; the course would not interfere with their general training, but would be supplementary to it. This principle is of the utmost importance, as without it such an institution would tend to become narrow in its outlook, and would defeat its own object by turning out men who were possibly expert in purely ecclesiastical music, but were not competent all round musicians.

There are other advantages pertaining to the hostel. As Mr. Nicholson says, it would provide a kind of collegiate life for men who may be unable to obtain such an advantage in any other way. Further, by opening its doors to a few students engaged in other branches of study—especially of singing—the social life of the institution would be widened, and a certain proportion of these extra residents would probably welcome the opportunity of joining in the choral work.

There is also, Mr. Nicholson thinks, 'another class of students for whom such a place would be of the greatest value':

There are many young men who go into other professions, but with the intention of devoting their spare time to, and incidentally augmenting their income by, work as 'semi-professional' organists and choirmasters. They are debarred from a regular course of training, and though in many cases they do valuable work, almost all of them would benefit greatly from the musical environment and practical experience which such a college could offer, even after office hours. In the future of Church music the training of such men must not be overlooked; the Church cannot possibly afford to pay a living wage to all its musicians, and in many places the greatest hope lies in the direction of the musically educated semi-amateur. There is little doubt then that such a hostel could be kept permanently full, and if well managed could be self-supporting.

Mr. Nicholson continues:

The central feature of the whole scheme of training would be a definite Church atmosphere, emanating from the services of the chapel. Students working in such an atmosphere would tend to become imbued with the right ideals, and by practical participation in the services (whether acting for the time being as organists, choirmasters, singers, or in other capacities) they would gain exactly that experience under guidance which at present they have to seek unaided after they go out into the world. The teaching should not be bound up with any one school of thought, musical or religious [We fear this comprehensiveness is less easy

of attainment than Mr. Nicholson imagines.—ED.]; the music and the services should be varied in character, and representative of the different types with which a student is likely to become associated in his after career. Not only would such an institution function as a training school, but it would form a natural centre for the promotion of Church music throughout the country, and even for the Dominions, which look to us for a lead in these matters.

For the launching of this admirable scheme a good deal of money will be necessary. This is a bad time for any kind of appeal, it seems. Yet far more costly enterprises have come into being in less affluent days, so there is nothing to be said in favour of waiting for windfalls: 'tis better to go ahead and shake the tree. Mr. Nicholson says the project has the warm approval of many leading ecclesiastics and musicians; and he is prepared to give further details to possible benefactors who will put themselves in touch with him.

The *Music Teacher* takes *Musical Opinion* and the *Musical Times* to task over their comments on the *Daily Express* community singing campaign. Our denial of the *Daily Express* claim to have started the movement, and our suggestion that Lord Beaverbrook might spend his spare thousands in ways more helpful to the cause of the art, the *Music Teacher* regards as 'utterly futile and utterly irrelevant.' But the first of these points is a question of fact, and the second is a matter of policy that is of vital importance in the present state of musical economics. When, for example, an important—or at all events widely circulated—daily paper tells its readers that on April 27 at St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, Scotland was to have its first community singing concert, it is simply saying something that is both stupid and false. In this very hall, as we pointed out in our first article on this subject, there has been held regularly for some years past, in connection with the Glasgow Festival, an example of community singing, conducted by Sir Walford Davies, compared with which the *Daily Express* affairs are mere vulgar and costly shows. The 'utter futility' lies in the *Daily Express* claim to give Scotland its first concert of the kind. Moreover, the 'sings' conducted by Sir Walford Davies have drawn packed crowds of three thousand year after year without the aid of such expensive baits as a full orchestra and soloists. And, as we have previously shown, this kind of activity, in a smaller way, has long been a regular feature at certain competition festivals. Fair play and truth still matter, surely, and we are not in the least ashamed of having nailed down the 'inexactitude' of the *Daily Express*.

The *Music Teacher* makes a good deal of the point that the *Daily Express* has 'put money in the pockets of professional musicians.' We should be the last to regret any kind of activity that had so happy a result. But the question is not so simple as it seems. We have heard of more than one instance of the much-advertised free concert of the *Daily Express* having a disastrous effect on some struggling local project with which it happened to clash; and in any case it may be questioned whether free concerts on so costly a scale are in the long run likely to benefit the cause of music. The problem just now is to get people to *pay* for their music. The lavishly-endowed free concert is about as likely to evolve a paying public as the dole is likely to produce enthusiasts for hard work.

Our contemporary rebukes us also for objecting to music being made a mere advertising stunt. 'For what other reasons on earth should a newspaper be interested in anything?' it asks airily. What of *The Times*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Yorkshire Post*, and other London and provincial organs? They contrive to flourish without sensational aids, and they devote to music ten times as much space as is spared by the *Daily Express*. And the space is filled with matter which a musician may read without being torn between laughter and a desire to throw things. For example, only in the *Daily Express* can we read such drivel as the following, from an account of the Albert Hall community concert conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham :

Climax after climax he built up, his recaptured baton strangely like a rapier playing against a hundred adversaries ; his left hand calling for more bass, more drums, more everything ; until, with a last encircling sweep of his baton, he brought the march to a crashing finish and brought the audience to their feet.

And, as an example of colossal, humourless impudence, take the following :

It may well be that musical historians will have to refer in the future to the night that the broad public discovered Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Symphony Orchestra, and when Sir Thomas Beecham discovered the broad public.

It is to laugh !

On another day we were told that a crowd sang 'Three Blind Mice,' 'in beautiful harmony.' Wonderful !

Again :

Suppressed murmurs of curiosity, furtive rustling of programmes died away as Dr. Malcolm Sargent walked to the conductor's desk to begin this festival of song. An upward sweep of his arm, a moment of monumental silence, and we were away into the festal enchantments of the Prelude of the third Act of 'Lohengrin,' played with immense zest by a symphony orchestra formed specially for the occasion.

At another concert, when the conductor rose to conduct 'O come, all ye faithful,'

. . . he stood for a moment as though sensing the temper of his vast chorus, then his arms swept upwards with irresistible purpose and Mr. Harold Williams launched himself into the first verse. The tune was admirably pitched [!] and brought out the strongest and finest notes in his voice.

Such a to-do about the starting of a familiar hymn reads like a parody.

Finally, we do not regret a word we have written on this subject, and ample evidence has been forthcoming to show that the views expressed in this journal are shared by musicians as a body. Despite the *Music Teacher's* reproof, we remain convinced that music stands to lose much and gain little by being used as a mere advertising medium, and (incidentally) as a basis for journalism flamboyant, ridiculous, and ill-informed to a degree hard to parallel even in these days of cheap and excited news-mongering.

The latest turn in the Queen's Hall affairs makes one doubt the genuineness of the wails over the economics of concert-giving. A few weeks ago Messrs. Chappell announced the end of the Promenades, on the ground of continuous loss. As for Queen's Hall itself, Fate was round the corner,

with the shutters ready to put up ; the orchestra was to be disbanded ; and scribes, giving their imagination rein, saw Sir Henry Wood reduced to touring the 'halls,' conducting at a cinema, or even (a brilliant flight, this) driven back on his hobby, carpentry, as a means of livelihood. Now, at a stroke, we have a new state of affairs. Sir Henry goes to the B.B.C., and Messrs. Chappell announce a new series of 'Proms,' to be conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham and others, including (probably) Dr. Malcolm Sargent and Mr. Albert Coates. The orchestra will be the L.S.O. As it seems pretty certain that this new series of 'Proms,' involving the engagement of several conductors and an 'outside' orchestra, so to speak, will cost a good deal more than the former type, the public is likely to develop severe pains in the head trying to reconcile Messrs. Chappell's two actions. First, they dropped the old 'Proms,' because they did not feel disposed to go on putting their hand in their pocket ; now they start a new and more speculative and costly series, presumably because they feel disposed to put their hand in deeper still.

However the public (its wonder over) will make no complaint, for it has long wished to see a more or less permanent association of Sir Thomas and the L.S.O. London will have its 'Proms,' and the army of listeners will rejoice in the B.B.C.'s capture of Sir Henry Wood. The outlook, therefore, so far from being gloomy, is brighter than it was before the recent crisis. The only danger is that the public will now be less likely than ever to stir itself on behalf of the economic side of concert-giving.

There is just now a welcome revival of chamber music activity, and already it is becoming a common experience to see groups of young players competing at festivals. No department of the competitive festival movement is more deserving of encouragement, and hardly any is in more urgent need of advice. We are therefore glad to be able to begin in this number a series of articles designed for the special benefit of young and inexperienced chamber music enthusiasts. The writer, Mr. James Brown, is exceptionally well qualified to act as adviser, on account of his experience both as teacher and adjudicator, and we hope readers will, as he suggests, bring the articles to the notice of any players who might otherwise miss them.

It has often been said that the enthusiasts who crowd to hear Gilbert and Sullivan's operas (the structure of which they do their best to destroy by encoring every number) are the least musical section of the public. Dame Ethel Smyth probably had this in mind when writing to the *Morning Post* a letter headed "Cosi fan tutte": An Appeal to Gilbert and Sullivan Devotees. Her object was to draw attention to the revival of Mozart's delightful comic opera, which (naturally) she thought would be the very thing for Savoyards. After pointing out that the run of the opera was likely to end unless audiences increased, she tackled Savoyards boldly : Did they wish to be classed with the mentally deficient who, if they read at all, read only one book? Were they prepared, year in, year out, to worship Gilbert and Sullivan and nothing else? If not, let them go to 'Cosi fan tutte' and 'Il Seraglio'—works bubbling over with melody and fun :

If you do not [she ended] then I fear there must be a good deal of alloy—laziness, convention, hysteria, and what not—in your appreciation of Gilbert and Sullivan.

They didn't go; 'Così' was withdrawn; and the Gilbert and Sullivan devotee is just what we thought he was.

In a *Spectator* review of Sir Bernard Pares's translation of Krylov's Fables we came across the following quotation from 'The Village Band,' which we cannot refrain from handing on :

'Well, yes,' said Smith, with feeling in his tone,
'I'm bound to own

They're not musicians highly skilled;
But all are members of the Parish Guild,
And all have signed the pledge.'

But as for me, I'd let them drink all day
If only they could play.

In our February number (p. 137) we quoted a mysterious order received by Messrs. Novello for a song entitled 'When I am Lady Nurse,' which after some hard thinking was correctly guessed to be the well-known air from 'Dido and Æneas.' *Punch* for May 18 has the following :

'In *Dido and Æneas*,' 'When I am Lady Nurse' was very beautifully rendered by Miss _____
Provincial paper.

All the same, we don't think much of her enunciation of 'laid in earth.'

The coincidence seems—in fact, we are sure it is—too good to be true.

Church and Organ Music

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 23, at 2.30 p.m.

DISTRIBUTION OF DIPLOMAS

Members and friends are cordially invited to attend the distribution of diplomas to successful candidates at the Fellowship, Associateship, and Choir-Training Examinations on Saturday, July 23, at 3 p.m. There will be an address by the President, Dr. W. G. Alcock, M.V.O., and an organ recital, by Dr. Stanley Marchant, of pieces selected for the January, 1928, examinations. No-tickets required. There will be an informal conversazione immediately after the recital, to which members and friends are invited. Tea and coffee.

H. A. HARDING, *Hon. Secretary.*

At Shillingstone Parish Church, Dorset, on May 11, the choir gave its third annual pair of concerts—afternoon and evening—the church being filled on both occasions. The programmes included the Credo, Offertorium, and 'Tantum Ergo' from Silas's Mass in C, Franck's 'Panis Angelicus,' Bach's 'My heart ever faithful,' Noble's Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in A minor, and violin, organ, and vocal solos by Handel, Spohr, Wagner, Tchaikovsky, &c., under the direction of Mr. Alexander Popham, the organist. About thirty pounds was collected for the organ and choir fund. The whole was a notable effort for a small village.

The organ at Bognor Congregational Church has been rebuilt by Messrs. Morgan & Smith, of Brighton, and is now a three-manual of twenty-seven stops. It was opened on May 18, Mr. Guy Michell giving a recital.

Messrs. Rushworth & Dreaper have reconstructed the organ at St. Matthias's, Torquay, and the opening took place on April 21, when Mr. W. L. Twinning gave a recital. The choir sang Bach's 'Jesu, Joy of man's desire' and Mendelssohn's 'Hear my prayer' (Madame Fifine de la Côte, soloist). Mr. Twinning's organ solos included Bach's E flat Prelude and Fugue and Rheinberger's seventh Sonata. The organ is now a well-equipped three-manual of thirty-three stops and twenty pistons.

The organ at St. Mary Magdalene's, St. Leonard's-on-Sea, has been reconstructed by Messrs. G. F. C. Foskett, and is now a three-manual with thirty-three stops. The opening recital was given on May 6, by Mr. Harry Goss Custard, who played Mendelssohn's sixth Sonata, Franck's Pastorale, Wolstenholme's Fantasia in E, Hollins's Rondo in B flat, Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, &c.

Messrs. Henry Willis & Sons have now completed the five-manual console for Brisbane Town Hall. This design represents all the most recent developments in console equipment, and so is worthy of inspection. It may be seen at the factory at any time during the next few weeks, and organists and others interested will be welcomed.

Dr. William Prendergast has just completed twenty-five years' service as organist and master of the choristers of Winchester Cathedral. At a large and representative gathering, including many clergy and organists of the Diocese, warm tributes were paid to his work, and the Mayor presented him with an address and a cheque.

The 'Hymn of Praise' was performed at Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds, on May 1, by the choir, assisted by the '25' Orchestra, conducted by Mr. W. J. Emery, with Mr. W. Parkin at the organ.

Dvorák's 'Stabat Mater' was sung at the Presbyterian Church, Kimberley, South Africa, on March 30, conducted by Mr. Frank Proudman, with Mr. W. W. Turnbull at the organ.

Messrs. Henry Willis have been commissioned to supply a new organ for the chapel of Glasgow University—a large three-manual, with adjustable pistons and electric action.

Dr. C. H. Moody has received many expressions of goodwill and appreciation on the completion of his twenty-fifth year as organist of Ripon Cathedral.

Messrs. Rushworth & Dreaper have just built an organ for the First Church of Christian Scientists, Cape Town—a two-manual, of thirteen stops.

RECITALS

Mr. A. M. Henderson, Glasgow University—Symphony No. 4, *Widor*; Improvisation and Alla Marcia, *Rheinberger*; Prelude on 'Now the labourer's task is o'er,' John E. West; *Elévation*, *Vierne*.

Dr. Albert C. Tysoe, Bradford Cathedral—Prelude and Fugue in E minor and three Chorale Preludes, *Bach*; Sonata, *Reubke*; Suite, *de Malingreau*; Fantasy on 'Babylon's Streams,' *Harris*.

Mr. Herbert F. Ellingford, St. George's Hall, Liverpool—Final in B flat, *Franck*; Toccata and Fugue in D minor, *Bach*; Sonata No. 1, *Mendelssohn*; 'The Ride of the Valkyries.'

Mr. Purcell J. Mansfield, Parish Church, Pollokshields—Fantasie No. 3, *Saint-Saëns*; 'Ite Missa Est,' *Lemmens*; 'Pantomime,' *de Falla*; Fugue, *Reubke*.

Mr. Douglas G. Rogers, Widford Church—Prelude and Fugue in A and Sonata No. 6, *Bach*; 'The Question' and 'The Answer,' *Wolstenholme*; Scherzo, *Gigout*.

Miss E. A. Chubb, St. Katharine's College Chapel, Tottenham—Elegiac Rhapsody, *Routham*; Carillon, *Brewer*; Prelude on the 'Old 104th,' *Parry*.

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Mr. Cecil S. Richards, Hexham Abbey—Overture to 'Julius Caesar,' *Handel*; Fugue in the Plagal Mode, *Albrechtsberger*; Spring Song, *Hollins*; Prelude on 'St. Mary,' *Wood*.

Mr. George F. Brockless, Barking Parish Church—Dorian Toccata and Fugue, *Bach*; Cantabile, *Jongen*; Pastel No. 3, *Karg-Elert*; Finale in B flat, *Wolstenholme*.

Mr. Maughan Barnett, Town Hall, Auckland, N.Z.—Toccata in D minor, *Bach*; Andante Cantabile, *Tchaikovsky*; Minuet, *Paderewski*; Prelude and Fugue in G minor, *Dupré*.

Miss Marjorie Renton, St. Mary-le-Bow—Toccata in F, *Bach*; Psalm-Prelude No. 3, *Howells*; Andante (String Quartet), *Debussy*; Fugue, 'Ad nos, ad salutarem undam,' *Liszt*.

Dr. Dennis Chapman, Middleton Parish Church—Con Spirito, *Arne*; Prelude and Fugue in C, *Bach*; Sonata No. 6, *Mendelssohn*; Pastorale and Finale (Symphony No. 2), *Widor*.

Mr. C. H. Trevor, St. John's, Glastonbury—Trio in B flat, *Rheinberger*; Triumphal March, *Karg-Elert*; Prelude Fugue, and Variation, *Franck*; Introduction and Finale (Sonata No. 1), *Mendelssohn*.

Mr. H. Middleton, St. John's, Peterborough—Prelude and Fugue in C minor, *Mendelssohn*; Meditation on 'Ave Maris Stella' and Postlude on 'Martyrs,' *Harvey Grace*; Pean, *Harwood*; Pastorale, *Franck*; Fugue on BACH, *Liszt*.

Mr. T. H. Ingham, Middleton Parish Church—Prelude and Fugue in G minor, *Bach*; Chorale Prelude, 'Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen,' *Brahms*; Canon in B minor, *Schumann*.

Mr. G. W. Harris Sellick, Manchester Cathedral—Prelude on 'Herzlich that mich verlangen,' *Brahms*; Fugue on 'Ad nos, ad salutarem undam,' *Liszt*; Pièce Héroïque, *Franck*; Pastorale (Symphony No. 2), *Widor*; Finale (Symphony No. 3), *Vierne*.

Mr. Wallace Thompson, St. Margaret Pattens, Eastcheap—'Mood-Fantasy,' *Rouley*; Toccata and Fugue in D minor, *Bach*; Carillon, *Vierne*.

Mr. Harold E. Atkinson, St. Saviour's, Walthamstow—Caprice, *Wolstenholme*; Prelude on 'York Tune,' *Wood*; Sonata in E flat (first movement), *Bach*; Introduction and Passacaglia in E minor, *Rheinberger*.

Mr. H. Goss Custard, Middleton Parish Church—Pastorale, *Franck*; Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, *Bach*; Rondo in B flat, *Hollins*; Introduction and Fugue, *Reubke*.

Mr. James M. Preston, Westoe U.M. Church, South Shields—Andante and Scherzo (Symphony No. 4), *Widor*; Sonata No. 2, *Mendelssohn*; Fugue à la Gigue, *Bach*; Finale (Sonata No. 1), *Guilmant*.

Mr. Arthur Meale, Central Hall, Westminster—Sonata No. 4, *Mendelssohn*; Introduction and Fugue, *Reubke*; Sonata Pascale, *Lemmens*; 'Fiat Lux,' *Dubois*; Cantilène in A flat, *Wolstenholme*.

Mr. Allan Brown, Guildhall, Portsmouth—Pastorale, *Franck*; Fugue in C minor, *Liszt*; Finale in B flat, *Wolstenholme*; Finale (Symphony No. 5), *Dvorak*.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr. E. J. W. Barrington, organ scholar at Oriel College, Oxford.

Mr. Leonard J. Caske, choirmaster and organist, St. Anselm's, Streatham, S.W.

Miss Enid M. Hugh-Jones, organist, St. Catherine's, Bramley, Guildford.

Mr. Francis J. Kennard, choirmaster and organist, St. Agnes, Kennington Park.

Mr. H. Wilfrid King, organist, Hounslow Wesleyan Church.

Mr. Alan May, choirmaster and organist, St. Giles', Cripplegate.

Mr. D. J. Cecil Moyce, choirmaster and organist, St. John's, Chislehurst.

Dr. Gordon Slater, choirmaster and organist, Leicester Cathedral.

Mr. D. N. Staniland, choirmaster and organist, London Road Wesleyan Church, Croydon.

Mr. R. Alwyn Surplice, choirmaster and organist, Holy Trinity Garrison Church, Windsor.

Letters to the Editor

THE BEETHOVEN CENTENARY

SIR.—It is something of a paradox that the great men who are held worthy of centenary observances make direct appeal to a relatively small number of people. Where this appeal is mainly historical, one can understand that the remoteness of the circumstances calls for larger imagination than most of us possess. But centenaries may concern the authors of enduring and still valuable work, in which cases the greatness of the tribute and the limitation of the appeal appear disproportionate. Of these Beethoven's is an instance; for one cannot disguise the fact that however widespread and genuine the celebrations of his Centenary, it is only among a certain class of music-lovers that his works find a ready welcome, the majority accepting him with various degrees of reservation. No doubt, too, there were many who responded in thought to the significance of the Centenary, and were glad to recognise in him one of the buttresses of the art without whom the superstructure in which they personally delight might never have come into being. Why appreciation does not extend to his music is explained by the character of mind which this music evidences. It is not due entirely to technicalities of construction or idiom—qualities only apparent to trained musicians.

The mind of Beethoven was of a rare type. It was so much stronger in concentrative power that our own minds find difficulty in keeping touch with his.

Analysis of a composer's mind (that is, his range of appeal) is more easily approached by way of comparison. We can accentuate in the subject of our inquiry the features we find missing from those we select for comparison. It will be agreed that Chopin appeals to a larger general public than any other composer; as an instance of earnestness that meets with little response we may take César Franck.

Between Beethoven and Chopin there is this in common, that they can both be exuberantly cheerful; note the former's Finale of the seventh Symphony, and the Polonaise in A of the latter. This indication of a common temperamental vigour is undoubtedly a solitary feature, but that it is there at all is significant. When we leave the static area of satisfaction and pass to the areas of resistance, we find the parallels separate into different directions. The resistances of Beethoven show far greater vigour, amounting often to actual disdain; for examples, the opening of the C minor Symphony and certain outbursts in the first movement of the 'Appassionata.' Here there is a power that seems to glory in a set-back, and drives on fearlessly through the obstacles.

Chopin, too, displays a battling energy, but there is always a tinge of anxiety behind his resistance. For all its stalwart promise, the music of the B minor Sonata betrays this furtive ingredient hovering in the background. The complete assurance of Beethoven is missing, and we may count this feature in Chopin as explaining the close enduring hold his music has upon us—on the vast majority who feel the impulse to do, but have not the confidence to ignore the obstacles.

It seems to be an axiom that where the exercise of resistance is impeded, the area of repression is correspondingly increased.

Repression in Beethoven rarely passes the boundaries of regret. In his Funeral Music he only doffs his hat in reverence; there is no sense of passionate loss—yes, just for a few moments at the diminished sevenths in the Pianoforte Sonata, which he characteristically brushes aside with an almost self-conscious rally.

But in Chopin repression often reaches the intensities of longing, as, for instance, in the opening bars of the E major Nocturne. And when we come to his aspect of a Funeral March we are carried by him through phases of intense gloom, imploration, vain defiance, dejection, and back to gloom, all of which are repeated after a mystical antithesis of self-sedation.

Turning now to César Franck, we have a third and again distinct type of mind. The obstacles of Beethoven and the anxieties of Chopin are in his case doubts and

despondency. Even in his 'Pièce Héroïque' he depicts a Hamlet suffering 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,' with none of the outbursts that suggest the power 'to take arms against a sea of troubles, and, by opposing, end them.' At times one almost detects the note of mental complacency. One would not wish the music of Franck to be responded to by the bulk of musical people, or continuously by any single individual.

Beethoven's relentless strength and undeviating purpose we must keep for the critical experiences of life, or we may stifle some of the tendernesses that make that life endurable. And so we react more readily to Chopin, where we find the fleeting lights and shades that resemble so closely the happenings of our own daily existence—the existence which for most of us is the measure of our vision.

A centenary of Chopin would probably move us but little: we know him too well, and commemorate him so often. With Beethoven it is different. The remoteness of his great qualities, while it narrows the appeal of his music, extends the glamour of his fame. Hence the paradox of his Centenary.—Yours, &c.,

55, Dora Road,
Wimbledon.

PERCY RIDEOUT.

Mr. Franz Somers writes from his School of Music, Southampton, to point out that the Beethoven celebrations in that town were less scanty than we had supposed. Mr. Somers and his colleagues are extending their Centenary observances over the whole of the year, with numerous free recitals, at which a long list of sonatas, concertos, and chamber works are to be heard—a kind of activity more valuable than a brief outburst. Our article on the Centenary celebrations was based on such reports as had been sent to us; it laid no claim to completeness, and we cannot make any further reference to the matter.

BEETHOVEN: RESEMBLANCE OF THEME

SIR,—Mr. H. R. Cripps calls attention to the similarity between the slow movements of the 'Pathetic' Sonata and the ninth Symphony (see May issue, p. 450). I wonder if he has ever noticed the resemblance between the former and the middle theme of Mozart's slow movement from the C minor Sonata:



It is even in the same key.—Yours, &c.,

Fernleigh,
Fernleigh Road, Plymouth.

WALTER P. WEEKES.

BEETHOVEN'S DEAFNESS

SIR,—In the review of Mr. Ernest Newman's book (*Musical Times*, p. 438), doubt is cast upon the cause of Beethoven's deafness, in spite of the report of the post-mortem—performed by a Dr. Wagner—which gives a pathological picture of the effects of the *Sprochaeta pallida*.

It has been my privilege to be the first, I believe, to bring forward a piece of evidence which clinches the diagnosis. In the archives of the Royal Philharmonic Society there is a certified photograph of Beethoven's skull, taken at the time of the exhumation, in 1863. I showed it at a Sectional Meeting of the Royal Society of Medicine in March, 1923, when speaking of the clinical aspects of Beethoven's deafness. The photograph shows that the bone in the region of the right ear is enormously thickened, a condition which proves that pathological action of a definite kind must have been going on for a

long space of time. I discussed Beethoven's physical condition in my book, 'The Musical Faculty,' which was published before I became aware of the photograph, but the startling significance of the diseased bone has definitely strengthened my conclusions. It cannot now be said that the cause of the deafness 'is a matter lacking all evidence' in the face of this discovery, which, taken with the other known lesions, upholds Mr. Newman's minute analysis. There are no bone lesions or anything characteristic in the morbid anatomy of typhus, according to the latest English and French authorities.—Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM WALLACE,

11, Ladbroke Road, W.11.

TRANSPOSITION OF AIRS IN THE B MINOR MASS

SIR,—I always read with interest all that I can find in the *Musical Times*, including reports of recitals and concerts, both vocal and instrumental. I was, however, particularly interested in a sentence contained in a report of the Bach Cantata Club's performance of the B minor Mass at Queen's Hall, on March 29. It ran as follows: 'The device of transposing "Laudamus Te" up to C seems positively to improve the music as well as suiting it to Miss Silk's voice.'

When I remember that Mr. Kennedy Scott was the conductor, and that very many eminent musical people are connected with, and interested in, the Bach Cantata Club, I rather hesitate to express my thoughts on the matter, but I would like the opinion of others interested.

In the first place, how far is one justified in altering the key of an isolated number of a big choral work? Had the composer in mind a certain progression of the work as a whole? Thus we find the preceding number, 'Gloria in excelsis,' written in D, 'Laudamus Te' in A, followed by 'Gratias Agimus' back again in D. It is obvious that A is an attendant key of D, and therefore more in keeping with the progression of the work.

In my copy of the Mass, 'Laudamus Te' is distinctly marked to be sung by a second soprano; it has also figured in the syllabuses both of the Royal Academy and the Royal College as a test-piece for a mezzo-soprano (performer), and therefore must be thought eminently suitable to the type of voice usually associated with a second soprano. I have every reason to believe that, transposed a minor third higher, it suited Miss Silk's charming voice very much better than in the original key—but need Miss Silk or a first soprano have sung it at all? I imagine, but do not know, that the second soprano part in the duet 'Christe Eleison' was taken by the contralto. Now it seems to me that the great Bach had a very definite idea that he wanted the varying tone-colours of the five different voices for which he wrote the various airs—first soprano, second soprano, contralto or alto, tenor, and bass, and one has only to look at the tessitura of these airs and duets to realise this. I therefore think it is a pity to exclude the second or mezzo-soprano voice when a part is specially written for it, particularly as there is not much scope for such a voice in oratorio and choral work generally.

Then again—cannot the transposing of one number in a work to suit a certain type of voice, if not creating a precedent, be the thin end of the wedge? One can imagine the tenor, perhaps, having the baritone aria raised a tone or two to enable him to sing it, and the bass having an air lowered for his special benefit, and in the end the work resembling a string of odd beads rather than a beautiful row of graduated pearls.

I would like to point out that my remarks referring to transposition apply only to the work as a whole, and not necessarily to an aria given as a solo apart from the work. Do not the Royal Academy and the Royal College allow us to sing our test-pieces a tone lower or a tone higher to suit our voices or our nerves? Even so, I personally always feel something of a sneak in so doing.—Yours, &c.,

19, Clifton Villas,
Camden Square, N.W.1.

A. GLEN SIDWELL.

COMMUNITY SINGING TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO

SIR.—The community singing boost—which for the past twelve months has permeated various gatherings, musical and otherwise—is regarded as ‘one of the most important of recent developments,’ and, indeed, many otherwise well-informed writers have not hesitated to describe community singing as ‘a marvellous 20th-century achievement.’ Now as a matter of sober history the genre goes back over two hundred years! To be precise, we have documentary evidence that on June 24, 1725, the Dublin Free and Accepted Masons started the vogue.

In the columns of the *Dublin Weekly Journal* of Saturday, June 26, 1725, we read a glowing account of the Masonic procession at Dublin on the Feast of St. John, when the brethren, dressed in full regalia, to the number of a hundred, marched to the Theatre Royal. Here is the arresting passage from this rare journal:

‘At the conclusion of the Play, Mr. Griffith, the Player, who is a Brother, sang the “Freemasons’ Apprentices’ Song,” the Grand Master and all the Brotherhood joining in the Chorus.’

Here is proof positive that in June, 1725, what is now called ‘community singing’ was at that date in vogue, and was, apparently, of Masonic origin. It is also of interest to note that the catchy tune to which the ‘Freemasons’ Apprentices’ Song’ (‘A free and an accepted mason’) was sung was an old Irish melody that had previously been used by Dean Swift for his ballad of ‘Jack Frenchman’s Lamentation,’ written for the victory of Oudenarde (July 11, 1708), and advertised in the *Daily Courant* of July 19, 1708.

It was not until December, 1728, that the Dublin vogue of community singing was heard in London, and here, again, it was on the initiation of the Masonic Order that we find chorussing introduced at a London theatre. We learn from a contemporary newspaper that the play of ‘Henry IV,’ Part 2, was ‘bespoke,’ at Drury Lane Theatre by the Grand Master of England—an Irishman, the Earl of Kingston—on Monday, December 30, 1728, for which a special Prologue and Epilogue suitable to the occasion were written. We read that ‘a scene was specially altered so as to introduce “The Prentices’ Song,” and a significant note is added: ‘All the Freemasons in the pit and boxes joined in the chorus, to the entire satisfaction of the whole audience.’

From Faulkner’s *Dublin Journal* of December 7, 1731, we get another glimpse of community singing at that date: ‘On Monday last [December 6] the “Funeral,” or “Grief à la Mode,” was acted at the Theatre Royal, for the benefit of Mr. Griffith,’ under the distinguished patronage of the Earl of Kingston, G.M., Lord Netterville, P.G.M., Lord Southwell, and others, ‘all in their Gloves and white Leather Aprons.’ It is added: ‘In the Songs of Masonry all the Brothers stood up and join’d in the Chorus, which made a fine Harmony.’

A performance ‘for the benefit of Sick and Decayed Free Masons,’ at Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, on St. Patrick’s night, 1730, and another on November 22, 1730, included ‘Songs of Masonry, with choruses by the Brethren, which greatly delighted the Audience.’ This same notice appeared in the account of the Masonic Benefit Plays in December, 1730.

Between 1730 and 1745 an inserted MS. list of Masonic toasts in the Dublin Lodges, with the songs chorussed by the Brothers, has been preserved in a copy of Anderson’s ‘Constitutions’ (1723), and we gather that the following were the songs then in vogue: ‘Come, let us prepare,’ ‘Mighty Eastern Kings,’ ‘On, on my brave boys,’ ‘Admiral Vernon,’ and ‘Proper Songs.’

Even at Belfast the Dublin vogue of community singing was in 1760 an established fact. We read in the *Belfast News Letter* that in March, 1763, at the Theatre there was

‘... a special Prologue by Mr. Parks, and an Epilogue (in the character of a Mason’s wife) by Mrs. Parks; and the original Masons’ Songs and Choruses between the Acts.’

On February 7, 1764, ‘Comus’s Concert’ was opened at the King’s Arms, Dublin, in which community singing was a feature. This ‘Comus’s Concert’ was the precursor of the modern music-hall, and was an offshoot of the ‘Choice Spirits’ Club (described by Goldsmith in his Essays, dating from the year 1759), presided over by ‘the Grand, Mallet in hand.’ In 1794, a ‘Harmonic Theatre’ in Dublin, at 53, Exchequer Street, originated the ‘Free and Easy’ haunts for community singing, after which date we find the ‘Apollo Saloon’ at 15, Grafton Street, as the home of ‘gay dogs,’ who invariably joined in the chorus of then popular songs, about the year 1827.

An Irish visitor to London, in 1846, describes the excellent community singing he heard at the ‘Coal Hole,’ which is believed to be the original of the ‘Cave of Harmony,’ so faithfully described by Thackeray, and where the objectionable song was sung which so sadly ruffled the temper of Colonel Newcome. In the ‘forties, too, a famous London saloon, called ‘The Bower,’ was run by Mr. George Alexander Hodson, an Irish composer of popular songs, e.g., ‘O give me but my Arab steed,’ ‘Tell me, Mary, how to woo thee,’ &c., whose granddaughter, Henrietta, became the wife of the late Henry Labouchere.

But there is no need to continue. The above facts from contemporary sources are more than sufficient to remove the idea that community singing is a new-fangled idea in Great Britain or Ireland, or that it drew its inspiration from the *Daily Express* boost.—Yours, &c.,

W. H. GRATTAN FLOOD.

[When has there *not* been community singing? Take the church side only, and turn up old Strype. He says, under date September, 1559:

‘The new Morning Prayer of St. Antholius, London; the bell beginning to ring at five [early Christians, these:] when a psalm was sung, Geneva fashion: all the congregation, men, women, and boys, singing together.’

Again:

‘As soon as they commenced singing in London, immediately not only the churches in the neighbourhood, but even the towns far distant began to vie with each other in the practice. You may now sometimes see at Paul’s Cross, after the service, six thousand persons, young and old, singing together . . .’

Is the singing of ‘Abide with me,’ at a football match, against a background of cat-calls, rattles, bells, &c., in order to advertise a daily paper, an improvement on this raising of a sturdy psalm-tune by six thousand believers in an open space in Old London?—EDITOR.]

‘WIND OR WYND’

SIR.—Your comment on Mr. Pitcher’s letter is both timely and welcome. It is amazing how the English language is mutilated by vocalists for the sake of facile ‘production,’ and the long ‘i’ is only one of many glaring examples.

But I should like to know what Mr. Pitcher would make of the second verse of the poem he quotes, viz., the rhyming of ‘warp’ and ‘sharp.’ Surely this should answer his contention as to ‘rhymes to the eye’?

I have often discussed this particular piece of Shakespeare with many of our leading vocalists, and they mostly vote for the long ‘i,’ and decline to sing the language as spoken to-day.

Oh! for more singing and less *vocalism* on our platforms! But long established custom dies hard, and though I have always insisted on my own pupils singing ‘wind’ with the short ‘i,’ whenever or wherever they may be giving one of the various settings of ‘Blow, blow,’ I frequently hear that either the critic or a member of the audience has commented on their pedantry, or else on their ignorance in failing to notice that they were singing poetry.

In any case, if ‘rhyme to the eye’ is utterly against the spirit of verse, then many of what are looked upon as classics stand condemned.—Yours, &c.,

The Fawns Manor,
Bedfont, Middlesex.

MAURICE VINDEN.

MODERN ORGAN RECITALS

SIR.—‘Listener’s’ article on ‘Organ Recitals, Ancient and Modern,’ in the February number of this journal, invites a few comments. I belong, alas! to the large class of ‘indifferent players’ who earn ‘Listener’s’ gratitude because we are no worse, but I propose to say something on certain points in case others may be too reticent to express their views—and perhaps too wise! So at the outset it must be presumed that not many readers still cling to that ‘don’t-criticise-unless-you-can-do-better-yourself’ theory.

That modern programmes are on the whole better than were those of forty years or so ago is indisputable. (By the way, does ‘Listener’ quite aptly describe the music of that time as ‘ancient’?) It is equally true that many excellent works are forgotten—if, indeed, some of our younger organists ever made their acquaintance at all. Merkels, certainly, is too seldom played. So are dozens of other composers whose music—if, perchance, it sounds a trifle old-fashioned to our ears—is none the less well worth playing now and again. Who, for example, ever plays Ritter’s Sonatas? No. 3 has some delightful moments, is brisk and energetic to a degree, and in certain respects is quite surprisingly up-to-date in character. Or how many church organists ever turn to solid (but not always stolid) old Hesse for their voluntaries? Yet, while we miss a good deal that is worth cherishing by our neglect of these ‘ancient’ compositions, I don’t think we need worry over-much because for the time being they are shelved. Organ-style is undergoing, or possibly just emerging from, one of those periodical changes which occur in every branch of music, and are a necessary factor in the gradual evolution of the art. Moreover, so vast and rapid is the output to-day, that even concert organists, to say nothing of those of us who have little time for keyboard work, are hard put to it to keep step. (Is too much being written?) Something, therefore, has to ‘go under.’ Granting that ‘the survival of the fittest’ applies in practice to music, it follows that some of these older composers for the organ, now under a cloud, will eventually come into their own again when the tide of new works begins to ebb, as inevitably it must to some extent sooner or later. Meanwhile, of course, recitalists of all grades of ability might do worse than experiment with a sifting process on their own account, rejecting inferior productions, old and new, and trying to embrace in their repertory the whole range of fine music. Impossible? Well, yes; perhaps so. But the very impossibility of the thing surely becomes a sort of winnowing machine which, to the general good, leaves us with only the pick of the crop to draw upon for our programmes.

If I may say so, ‘Listener’ proves that he has the root of the matter in him when he tells us that while he cheerfully curtails his lunch in order to ‘hear good organ music properly presented,’ he satisfies the ‘inner man’ in preference to going to ‘hear how fast Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones can wag his fingers.’ For him, in short, musicianship is everything, and mere technical agility a minor detail. He then discusses some of the differences between the older school of organists, whose performances left the impression that they had ‘something up their sleeve,’ and a certain type of technique, much in evidence nowadays, which is ‘often accompanied by the idea that the organist is “doing all he knows.”’ Let us agree that this uncomfortable feeling of insecurity, of a lack of reserve power, is not always pure fancy, that it exists because the performer is in fact using his last ounce of digital and interpretative skill, uncommonly well-supplied with the first commodity though he be. It seems to me (I may be wrong) that we are not so conscious of this defect as to lose our enjoyment, if we are deeply absorbed in the music itself—as we ought to be. Perhaps it would be nearer the mark to say that we begin to detect weaknesses (save those of downright incompetency) only on reflection after the performance. After all, the soundest criticism is based on a cool, level-headed review of the proceedings when they are over; by being too critical during the playing of a piece we are apt to notice a bitter taste and to miss the spirit of the music in concentrating on the letter. Every performance should be judged on the final impression

it leaves. Hence I think we must concede that a really brilliant technical display, when backed up by a tolerably intelligent reading of the score, is at least an infectious affair, though it may fail to ‘dig deep.’ It may not be, is not always, the highest type of musicianship, but we come away feeling mentally and physically invigorated and braced-up. When writing for the general public it is not usual, for obvious reasons, to defend this kind of playing; but amongst ourselves we might as well admit frankly that it is not entirely devoid of merit, or of a useful purpose in the scheme of things. Anything that gives innocent pleasure cannot be wholly bad.

At the other end of the scale is the player who, with everything at his fingers’ ends in the way of technique and musicianship generally, somehow fails to ‘get over’ to his audience all that he himself sees in the music and is anxious that they should see too. How can we account for this? Well, if I may hazard a guess (again I may be wrong), it is sometimes because he is thinking far too much about ‘interpretation’ and not nearly enough of the spirit of the music. Naturally bent on dealing fairly by composer and audience alike, consciously or only subconsciously he allows this ‘interpretation’ business to become an obsession—an end in itself rather than a means to an end. Thus does he miss his object by the very zeal with which he pursues it! For argument’s sake, we may regard his music as a picture in sound, and himself as a thoroughly competent and devoted ‘guide’—which is, I take it, what he endeavours to be. As is the way of guides, then, here he is, as it were, standing before and well back from the picture, the better to focus it, drawing our attention to its beauties of form and construction, but especially to its unified variety in ‘colour’—doing it all with infinite love of his subject and no little skill, and yet leaving us unconvinced, with a sense of something being amiss. Of course there is something lacking: the contribution of his own individuality. The picture being a musical one, its ‘canvas’ we know is time, and we cannot pause to admire it in the leisurely fashion in which we would approach a painting. The most beautiful sequence of notes or chords begins to fade into nothingness even as our mental eye becomes aware of it. No; a player cannot be a guide in the ordinary sense of the term. He must, rather, be a real, vital part of the picture itself, his mind having worked, during practice hours, in thorough sympathy with and understanding of the composer’s mind; and by the time the doors are opened the fusion of these two intellects should be so perfect as to form a potential but none the less complete musical picture—which, granted a continuance of the closest intimacy of thought and feeling during its presentation, will be at once not only intelligible but a thing of delight to all cultivated listeners. In a word, if the player will take the trouble to get right inside the music, and will stay there, ‘interpretation’ may be left to shift for itself; for, other things being equal, an enjoyable and satisfying presentation of a musical work follows sincere and sustained application on the part of the player as surely as day follows night.—Yours, &c.,
Purley, Surrey.

STANLEY LUCAS.

TO CAMPANOLOGISTS

SIR.—Kindly allow me space to say that I shall be glad to hear from any readers of the *Musical Times* who would like to correspond with me on carillons and bells. I have visited the towers of Holland and Belgium; and was present at the Congress of Carillonneurs, at ‘s Hertogenbosch, in 1925. I have an extensive collection of literature, &c., on the subject.—Yours, &c.,

R. HARPER.

11, Dale Street South,
Stockport.

A CORRECTION: ‘TOWN,’ NOT ‘SCHOOL’

SIR.—Will you kindly correct a mis-statement that appears on p. 446 of the May *Musical Times*? The singers at the Romsey Abbey Festival were drawn from Dauntsey School, &c., and the Marlborough Town Choral Society.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN IVIMEY.

Marlborough College,
Wiltshire.

LONDON COLLEGE OF MUSIC

SIR.—In case the correspondence is not closed, I wish to thank you for your generous admission that the London College of Music is doing excellent work as a teaching centre. You refuse, however, to publish its advertisements because you consider its examination standard is low. How can we judge standard? I gave you my personal experience that the standard adopted by the L.C.M. was higher than that adopted at competitive festivals, but you do not refuse to publish *their* advertisements.

Can we judge standard by the proportion of successes to failures? I doubt it. But if we can, the L.C.M. has two passes to every three candidates, the L.R.A.M. has one pass to every three candidates, and the R.C.O. has one pass to every seven candidates. On this basis the L.R.A.M. is much easier than the R.C.O., and you should refuse to publish its advertisements. At what proportion do you draw the line? How many candidates must the L.C.M. fail for you to accept payment from it for advertisements?

I admire your paper immensely. Its freedom of speech and crusade against cant are admirable. But by setting up to be a censor of examination standards are you not needlessly fussy? In the long run both teachers and performers are judged by the public by results. If at every concert, examination, and competition the L.R.A.M. students beat the L.C.M. students, the public, which cares little for labels, will soon find it out.

However, here is a chance for real sportsmanship. Let each college select its thirty best students in the varying branches of its curriculum, and let those students compete before unprejudiced judges not for prizes, but for the honour of their college. If one college always wins, there is no more to be said. But I venture to think that the L.C.M. would not be last.—Yours, &c., L.C.M.

[Our correspondent overlooks vital point: Competitive Festivals do not award diplomas that carry with them the right to wear caps and gowns, or to use initials implying academic distinction. A similar lack of logic is shown in the suggestion that we should refuse to publish the advertisements of the R.A.M. because the percentage of passes in the L.R.A.M. examination is higher than in those of the R.C.O.! We fear 'L.C.M.' has not yet grasped the facts of the situation. We barred the advertisements of certain institutions because we were satisfied that those bodies were conducting examinations in a manner calculated to hinder the cause of music, and to injure well-qualified teachers. The proportion of passes is a sign, and on 'L.C.M.'s' own showing the L.C.M. figure is higher than that of other examining bodies. But in arguing this point he forgets an important consideration: the candidates for the R.A.M. diplomas are already well-advanced students, and are prepared by expert teachers who do not send them up for examination unless the chance of success is pretty good. 'L.C.M.' should read the *Daily Mail* article reprinted on page 515, where this point is well put. We end this discussion with a personal recollection: In our early days as a teacher we—bother that 'we'? Let us drop it—one of my first pianoforte pupils was a small girl who had obtained quite an imposing array of certificates issued by a proprietary 'college'. Among them was one for sight-reading. Inquiring as to the test, I found it had been one of Schumann's 'Scenes from Childhood,' a piece which the child said *she knew quite well!* At that time I had no knowledge of the traffic in diplomas, but on hearing this remarkable admission I glanced at the row of framed trophies hung above the pianoforte and came to the conclusion that all the necessary information had been acquired in a moment. I add that this pupil's playing was very poor.—EDITOR.]

We have received more letters on the L.C.M. than we can publish, and the correspondence on this subject must cease for the present. Although the writer of the following courageously withholds his name and address, we publish his letter for the entertainment of our readers:

May 14, 1927.

SIR.—With reference to the articles which have appeared in your March-May issues of the *Musical Times* re the London College of Music.

Can this College be of such low standard as you publish when we have some of the best musicians possible on the staff of examiners, and is it possible that they are wasting their valuable time?

You also mention you do not publish advertisements on their behalf. These are not necessary, the L.C.M. being so widely-known and founded since 1887, like Johnny Walker is still going strong.

I might also add that while you allow such articles to go to press I shall have to finish purchasing your monthly journal, and shall induce my friends, &c., to do likewise.—Yours, &c., A CLOSE CONNECTION WITH THE COLLEGE.

[‘The best musicians’ must themselves judge as to whether they are ‘wasting their time.’ If advertisements of the L.C.M. are not necessary, why do they still appear in various journals? And why were they sent to us until we refused them? Presumably our correspondent has hitherto purchased this journal because it was well worth his monthly sixpence. If he now decides to cut off his nose to spite his face—for we shall certainly continue to ‘allow such articles to go to press’—we shall not attempt to dissuade him, since nose and face are his own.—EDITOR.]

ON DISCOVERING DIAMONDS*

SIR.—Mr. Brent-Smith’s articles are full of a non-technical charm, but his latest rather tempts me to waste a little time in carpings, while admitting the excellency of his subject-matter, which must appeal to all with any musical experience.

Why does he suppose that there is any difference between music and the other arts in respect to his contentions? What does he mean by ‘delving beneath the type’ and by ‘scraping the paint off a picture’ for literary and pictorial gems? All that his argument comes to is the degree of response and receptivity in the enjoyer of the work of art. Naturally, the superficial miss a lot, everywhere. You don’t have to scrape a picture—you simply have to look at it to find details that you, yourself, respond to, and they excite your enthusiasm. It is the same with literature. To delve beneath the type is as irrational as scraping a picture. You simply hold yourself receptive to what you are reading, and if you are properly constituted the gems assert themselves more effectively if you are passive than if you are active. We may be sure that the artists who put them there knew all about them—at least I am confident that they did in the case of painting and poetry. If we cannot see them all at first—and who of us could?—we are not yet at the acme of our potential receptivity. I gather that Mr. Brent-Smith imagines that in music the ‘diamonds’ are fortuitous, and not known to anybody until they are discovered by accident or exploration.

As to the metaphor ‘lower strata’ of contrapuntal music, I think he would have done better with the recognised simile of ‘warp and woof’ as figuring the texture of counterpoint; ‘lower strata’ gives a wrong mental image—suggesting much beyond ordinary human ken. This may do for the modernists, but not for Bach. Obviously Mr. Brent-Smith had to be loyal to his title; but are his beauties really in the shape of diamonds? Do they want digging out—or do they not come out and find us? One has lived with me all my life as the most moving melody of its kind that I know. It is the tenor part in a chorus, going with the words ‘Be ye patient, O my brethren,’ &c., in Brahms’s ‘Requiem.’ I didn’t dig it out; it overwhelmed me when I sang it—but I doubt whether it has struck anybody else.

The examples from Bach and Parry are not flawless gems. ‘Glor-ory’ is what the first bar does for ‘glory’; and ‘vi-brates’ in the Parry is not of the first water.

I fancy Mr. Brent-Smith is off the mark in his Praxiteles allusion. Is he not thinking of a cast of a head that was attributed to Cellini, I believe, by Dr. Bode, and afterwards found to be stuffed with a modern waistcoat, not breeches?—Yours, &c.,

F. C. TILNER.

Walden, Cheam,
Surrey.

THE TEACHING OF MUSIC IN PUBLIC AND PREPARATORY SCHOOLS

SIR.—In the Autumn of 1925 a Memorandum dealing with the teaching of music in Public and Preparatory Schools, and asking for the inclusion in the Common Entrance Examination of an optional or alternative paper on Music, was submitted by the Music Masters' Association (then the Union of Directors of Music in Secondary Schools) to the Joint Committee of the Headmasters' Conference and the Preparatory Schools Association. The Joint Committee, while expressing sympathy with the purpose of the Memorandum, decided that it was impracticable to include such a paper in the Common Entrance Examination, but suggested that attention might be drawn to the subject in the columns of the *Preparatory Schools Review*. The views of the Committee of the Music Masters' Association are summarised below.

The growing attention which Music is now claiming in the Public Schools as a subject of general, as apart from special, study makes it desirable to state clearly the aim which is being pursued, and to suggest methods by which this aim may be furthered. In the current syllabuses of the various examining bodies the importance of Music is winning increased recognition, while the examination requirements are being brought closely into touch with modern ideas of music teaching. (The examinations referred to include the Schools Certificate for the Oxford and Cambridge School Examinations Board; London Matriculation; the Oxford Local Examination—School and Junior Certificates—in all of which examinations Music is now eligible as a qualifying subject.) Granted that a knowledge of music is a normal part of a liberal education and equipment, Schools should aim at putting such knowledge within every boy's reach.

Such an aim obviously concerns a far larger number of listeners than performers, and it is to secure, so far as may be, a co-ordinated policy on the part of Preparatory and Public Schools that the following suggestions are offered:

The listener's training should consist of:

- (a) Class-singing (with sight-singing from Tonic Sol-fa and Staff notation as a most important element).
- (b) Aural training (recognition of tunes, intervals, &c.).
- (c) A knowledge of as much standard music as possible.

The above are given in order of importance, and could be amplified as follows if circumstances allow:

- (a) and (b) To include such knowledge of musical notation as can be tested by Dictation.
- (c) Elementary analysis of works (the tunes; the forms; the media through which they are expressed; the historical position of their composers).

In (c) the gramophone and the 'Duo-Art' piano will be found invaluable assets.

The 'singing' class should be considered a 'Music' class in which—though singing and sight-reading should rank as of first importance—time should be spent in giving boys a fairly comprehensive musical education.

The performer's training is usually confined to pianists and stringed instrument players. For progressive training in these cases, the syllabus of the 'Schools' Examinations for the Associated Board would prove a useful guide.

Every lesson and practice should include a sight-reading test.

It is felt that considerably more encouragement might be given to those outside the above category to learn a wind instrument.

Such a scheme, if adopted by the Preparatory Schools, would be of the greatest assistance to the Public Schools in their preparation for the School Certificate of the Oxford and Cambridge Board, the Music syllabus of which follows in the main the suggestions made by the Music Masters' Association.

As the Public School age is too late for this type of training to be begun with any assurance of success, the co-operation of Preparatory Schools is indispensable. The Music Masters' Association exists mainly for the purpose of solving the musical problems of the school, and the accession to its ranks of members who are responsible for the music in Preparatory Schools would add considerable weight to their counsels.

All music teachers in Preparatory Schools are eligible for membership of the Music Masters' Association, details of which can be obtained from the Secretary, A. Rawlinson Wood, Denstone College, Rocester, Staffs.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN IVIMEY
(President, Music Masters' Association).

THE CURSE OF THE VIBRATO

SIR.—An adjudicator at an Eisteddfod recently voiced his condemnation of the singers' vibrato, and added that it was the curse of Welsh music. He might truthfully have said that it was the curse of women singers of every nation.

The broadcast programmes give us women singers of every kind, and they are all tarred with this brush with the exception of musical comedy stars.

The rot has even reached the sopranos and contraltos in choruses, and we have in the last month or two had some truly fearful performances. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that a woman vocalist is now more often than not perpetually flat, even when, by virtue of vibrato, she is singing in two keys simultaneously.

Only in Erehwon would the 'cock and hen choir' meet with its reward, and the public be adequately protected from, e.g.:



Perhaps Mr. Churchill could institute a tax to meet the situation. The organist might, under the same statute, pay an exemplary yearly fee for his tremulant.—Yours, &c.,
Cressage.

CORBETT SUMSION.

Salop.

'THE COMPOSER AND THE LARYNX'

SIR.—May I express my appreciation of Mr. Dawson Freer's most useful article which appeared in your May issue?

At the present time, when the writing of a melody is, by many, considered an admission of weakness, and contempt for all the law of contrapuntal progression is the order of the day, it is small wonder that vocal writing suffers.

A perusal of many modern songs leads one to conclude that the composer is not honestly expressing his own sincere emotions, but rather sacrificing these in the interests of a questionable search after 'originality.' I think it will be conceded that no composer, whose words have stood the test of time, ever consciously sought to be 'original.'—Yours, &c.,

H. B. WEATHERDON.

13, Frederica Road, E.4.

THE DEARTH OF CHOIRBOYS

SIR.—There can be no doubt that the entirely male parish church choir is on the decrease. We have had the reason offered that there is a shortage of choirboys, but I think most thoughtful people regard this excuse as eyewash. Personally, I have experienced no actual shortage of boys, but I have met with the indifference which seems to be the most unfortunate circumstance of the affair. After all, you cannot expect a boy to have much enthusiasm in the matter if his parents do not care two pence about it. There is much room for improvement in that direction. But I believe that if more choirmasters would cultivate a less severe personality, which is the necessary asset now to be successful with boys (and really often consists only in recalling one's own boyhood), a plenitude of young fellows

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could easily be recruited from no further distance than the Sunday School, for there are few boys who do not possess a trainable voice. Yet how many choirmasters ever take trouble in this humanistic way? We acknowledge that the training of the choirboy from the beginning entails much uphill work and constant slogging, and it seems feasible to suppose that to-day many choirmasters accept decent positions with no intention of inconveniencing themselves. The result is that women sopranos are introduced instead of boys, and are (in the minds of many, to say the least of it) by no means so effective. It would appear, therefore, that there is an earnest call for greater patience and certainly more perseverance on the part of those who are entrusted with the training of choirboys; and further that we may all demand greater help from those who are in a position to revitalise the public in the matter, amongst whom may be mentioned the clergy, the schoolmasters, and, most valuably, the Festival adjudicators.—Yours, &c.,

HAROLD WILKINSON
(*Director of Music, St. Wilfrid's, Bradford.
Formerly Chorister in Durham Cathedral.*)

Sharps and Flats

A few more years and sloppy sentimentality, cheap novels, Hollywood bathos, and the canonising mania of the musical pontiffs will have created Johann Strauss into yet another musical myth—one of those perfectly kickable prigs whose wholly fictitious effigies, diffusing saintliness, unction, snugness, and an unbelievable likeness not only to each other, but to all other unpleasant kinds of people, appear in cheap oleographs, on Christmas almanacs, in centenary books, portraits, busts, and films, and on public monuments, the horror of which renders it inevitable that every locality which suspects that it has given birth to a genius shall seek to kill him before the fact becomes so famous as to render inevitable the official uglification of their thoroughfares, public places, and landscapes.—Leigh Henry.

I have never yet seen a Siegfried in whom I could believe, and I have given up hopes that I ever shall. Nearly half of them have been merely 'principal boys,' and nearly the other half merely big Glaxo babies.—Ernest Newman.

Spanish Caprice . . . Rimsky, arr. Korsakov.—*Radio Programme.*

Volume of tone Lauritz Melchior certainly has when he lets his voice go: Hunding, I felt, must be a particularly heavy sleeper not to be wakened by Siegmund towards the end of the first Act of the 'Valkyrie'; even I, many yards away, could not get a wink of sleep.—Ernest Newman.

If a bunch of musicians are members of two or three bands, the director leads two of the bands and one of the three bands wins the grand prize, who's the best band? committee-wantss-bands ThendorecheaCh. z. The committee wants bands and orchestras six or twelve months old, composed of all beginners, to compete with the old players and try and win a prize. That is what we call ROTT.—*Indignant Editorial in 'Houston (Texas) Show Guide.'*

. . . the Three Choirs Festival, whatever that may be (laughter).—Sir Thomas Beecham.

The gathering then broke into songs of a patriotic nature, 'Rude Britannia' being given full voice.—*Dominion Paper.*

It has become almost a pleasure to attend functions and assume the rôle of Jeremiah. I do so with an undiminished spirit of ardour, because I am quite aware that nobody pays the slightest attention to me, and nobody ever will.—Sir Thomas Beecham.

Critics do not like a young singer, and I have had some extraordinarily bad notices . . . I was naturally very distressed . . . Now I do not worry at all, for I have found that audiences are influenced little, if at all, by such criticisms.—Jan Kiepura.

Before I sing an important rôle I must always be alone with nature.—*Delia Reinhardt.*

It is so necessary to eat carefully: no porridge or potatoes for a prima donna who would preserve her figure.—*Sigrid Onegin.*

England and America are games-mad; they will produce future generation of enormous muscles and small brains.—*Fedor Chaliapin.*

The Amateurs' Exchange

Under this heading we insert, free of charge, announcements by amateur musicians who wish to co-operate with others.

Tenor wishes to meet pianist (male) for mutual practice. Oratorio and Bach's works. Two or three evenings a week. Purley district.—G. B., c/o *Musical Times*.

Violinist (intermediate to advanced) wishes to join trio, quartet, or amateur orchestra. Nottingham district.—FOSSEY, 11, Annfield Terrace, Denman Street, Nottingham.

Violinist and pianist wish to meet 'cellist to complete trio. Classical music only.—BM/RDDP, W.C.1.

Lady vocalist wishes to meet lady pianist one evening a week for mutual practice. Good sight-reading essential. Hampstead district.—N. ROBINSON, 14, Belsize Crescent, N.W.3.

Violinist wishes to meet flautist and 'cellist for practice of chamber music. Birmingham.—A. W. Y., c/o *Musical Times*.

Violinist wishes to meet pianist interested in accompanying violin class occasionally.—30, Revelow Road, S.E.4.

Amateur pianist wishes to meet enthusiastic violinist for concerted music (sonatas, overtures, &c.). London.—R. G., c/o *Musical Times*.

Pianist and violinist wish to meet good 'cellist for mutual practice.—18, Normanton Road, Clifton, Bristol.

Lady pianist wishes to meet instrumentalist or vocalist for mutual practice. S.E. district.—FRIEND, 358, High Street, Lewisham, S.E.13.

Pianist and violinist wish to meet advanced 'cellist to form trio. Guildford district.—H. I. P., c/o *Musical Times*. Good amateurs wanted to join 'cellist to form pianoforte and string quartet for collective and progressive regular practice. Also accompanist, preferably advanced student, for individual practice.—CHARLES P. COCKS, 158, Morland Road, Addiscombe, Croydon.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

The summer term opened with a considerable increase in the number of students, and both artistically and educationally it promises to be of exceptional interest.

An orchestral concert in celebration of the Beethoven Centenary will be given at Queen's Hall on June 14, when Sir Henry Wood will conduct. Included in the programme will be 'Wellington's Siege, or the Battle of Vittoria,' the first movement of the Violin Concerto, with Miss Phyllis Macdonald as soloist, and the ninth Symphony. After the highly successful performance of the 'St. Matthew' Passion by both orchestra and choir, the presentation of the 'Choral' will be anticipated with keen interest. Composers of string quartets are few and far between in this country, therefore the concert announced to take place at Wigmore Hall on June 17 is of more than passing importance. The Virtuoso String Quartet (Miss Marjorie Hayward, Mr. Edwin Virgo, Mr. Raymond Jeremy, and Mr. Cedric Sharpe) will play three Quartets—two of them first performances—by one composer, Dr. John B. McEwen, Principal of the Academy. The direction and superintendence of a big educational machine does not allow much leisure for the pursuit of art, but writing music is Dr. McEwen's hobby, and the hobby might easily have been a life's work had circumstances been different.

Next month will be held the examination for the special diploma for the Teachers' Training Course of the Academy. This is an event of first-class importance in both musical and educational centres. For some years Teachers' Training Courses have been held in different parts of the country, but this is the first time that an examination has taken place, and it marks a long stride in the better direction of musical education. The Teachers' Training Course is the Academy equivalent to the fourth year, as post-graduate, at the Universities, and for the information of those interested, we add that the year begins in September.

Next month also there will be a week of opera at the Scala Theatre, under the conductorship of Mr. Julius Harrison. No lack of enterprise can be alleged against the Opera Class, and this year's production should be a great adventure, the operas to be presented being 'Die Meistersinger' and 'Fidelio.' Rehearsals have been in full swing for a long time, and everything is in a forward state of preparation.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

The arrangements for the summer term are now sufficiently complete to give an idea of the work that will be claiming attention during the next eight weeks.

Besides the usual College concerts and recitals, there will be two Patrons' Fund rehearsals for artists and composers, provisionally arranged for June 2 and 23. These will be conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent, owing to Dr. Adrian Boult's absence in America. Dr. Sargent will also have the direction of the two principal orchestral concerts of the term, for which Elgar's second Symphony and De Fallo's 'Three-Cornered Hat' are already in active preparation.

The very real advantages accruing from the Parry Opera Theatre and the Ernest Palmer Opera Fund manifest themselves more and more each term. In the first week of June will be given private performances of Bernard Shaw's 'Arms and the Man' (by the Junior Dramatic Class of the College), and of Gustav Holst's new Choral Ballet (by members of the English Folk-Dance Society). Two works of special interest are also in rehearsal, namely, Debussy's 'Pelleas and Melisande' and Beethoven's music to 'Egmont,' with the appropriate scenes of Goethe's tragedy.

The Inner Hall, which was informally opened by the Prince of Wales last term, will be occupied for the next few weeks by a special exhibition of Beethoven relics arranged by the kindness of Mr. Arthur F. Hill, who has been fortunate in securing many manuscripts and objects of personal interest from generous lenders. A conspicuous feature is a contemporary portrait of the composer, which Mr. Hill has recently acquired and presented to the College.

The College Union reaches its majority this year, and will fittingly celebrate the occasion during the last week of June.

TRINITY COLLEGE OF MUSIC

The summer term opened auspiciously, the number of students being well up to the average of the past few years.

On the first Wednesday of term, Bishop Welldon delivered the inaugural address, on the subject of 'Music and Manners.' The address, which was both interesting and instructive, received the utmost attention of the students, who signified their appreciation of his Lordship's remarks in a hearty manner.

Diplomas recently gained were presented; also the Grosvenor Gooch Prizes, which were awarded to Miss Brightman and Miss Pirkis.

In the second week of term the College orchestra provided the music for the Presentation Day ceremony of the University of London at the Albert Hall. Amongst the musical graduates to present themselves at the investiture was Dr. Richard J. Chanter, a student of the College.

Local distributions of prizes and certificates have been held at Hastings, Chester, Plymouth, and Luton.

At the conclusion of the recent Bournemouth examinations, Dr. Horner, the Director of Examinations, met a

number of teachers at tea to talk over matters in connection with the College examinations.

Mr. H. Llewelyn Howell, a member of the College Board, has most generously augmented his previous donation to provide funds for the assistance of orchestral students.

Teachers and others will be interested to know that three new books of Pianoforte Studies for the Senior, Intermediate, and Junior Grades of the Local Examinations can now be obtained. These Studies, although in some respects an advance in technique on those at present in use, are not intended to supersede the latter; but they afford to teachers a wider choice of material for preparing pupils for the Local Examinations of the College.

LONDON CENTRE

The annual presentation of exhibitions, prizes, and certificates gained last year, was held on Saturday, April 30, at Central Hall, Westminster. Dr. John Warriner presided, and Sir George Hume, M.P., late Chairman of the London County Council, presented the awards. Dr. Warriner, in his introductory remarks, reminded the audience that their distinguished visitor recently held sway over a larger population than that governed by many reigning monarchs. Musical education was progressing, but although wireless was doing its part, students should remember that wireless could not play an accompaniment, and that was where proficient musical performers proved their superiority. The secretary of the London Centre (Mr. Lester Jones) alluded to the difficulties encountered last year. Naturally, he said, the disastrous strikes affected everybody in this country, and entries were smaller than in 1925. The Colonies rallied to such purpose that the aggregate number of entries for 1926 from all sources exceeded those in any previous year. Sir George Hume pointed out that one of the chief anxieties of educationists to-day was to discover and develop latent talent. They offered opportunities to those who showed more than ordinary ability, and helped them to rise above their present conditions when handicapped by poverty and environment. He acknowledged the efficient service rendered by Trinity College in the cause of musical advancement. Prof. Joseph Bridge (Chairman of the Board) advocated musical study in the home, and urged that special attention be given to the art of elocution. He said that competition in every walk of life was becoming keener, and that those who proved their value by passing examinations would be preferred to those who had not. Dr. Horner (Director of Examinations) proposed a vote of thanks to Sir George Hume, which was seconded by Mr. C. N. H. Rodwell. An interesting musical programme was given by Misses Olive Cashmere, Juliette Cook, Elsie Eaglestone, and Dora Gilson, and Messrs. Gordon Mutter and Ronald Lazard, all of whom had distinguished themselves either as exhibitors or as prize-winners.

THE ASSOCIATED BOARD: AWARD OF MEDALS

The following candidates gained the gold and silver medals offered by the Board for the highest and second highest honours marks, respectively, in the final, advanced, and intermediate grades of the Local Centre Examinations in March-April last, the competition being open to all candidates in the British Isles: Final Grade Gold Medal, Katherine H. Davis, Manchester centre (pianoforte), and Christina H. Collinge, Newcastle-upon-Tyne centre (violin) (these two candidates gained an equal number of marks); Final Grade Silver Medal, Nina L. Jones, Cardiff centre (pianoforte); Advanced Grade Gold Medal, James H. Phillips, Kingston-on-Thames centre (violincello); Advanced Grade Silver Medal, Nora Richardson, Dublin centre (violin); Intermediate Grade Gold Medal, Margery W. Smith, Bristol centre (pianoforte); Intermediate Grade Silver Medal, Gwendoline M. Browne, Kingston-on-Thames centre (pianoforte).

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London Concerts

DELIUS AND BERLIOZ

Sir Thomas Beecham conducted the London Symphony Orchestra and the Philharmonic Choir in a programme of Mozart, Berlioz, and Delius at Queen's Hall, on April 11. It was a good concert—one for which every soul in the audience must have felt it had been worth while turning out. Sir Thomas, with his customary nonchalant daring, conducted everything by heart.

Delius's 'Sea-Drift' will surely live, if anything he has written does. It is a surprise at first; but, the surprise past, it heightens our respect for the artist's delicacy—that the music does not make straight and simply for the central emotion of the poem, the love-lorn singer's loneliness and heart-breaking bereavement, but wraps it round, so to say, with leafy and watery murmurs, with the scenery, that is, of the sad little woodland romance of deserted nest and distraught, widowed bird. It has been said that 'Sea-Drift' does not 'come off.' Delius has certainly fought shy of the *gross moyens*. For this very reason his is an art one can grow to like more and more.

It was a performance to make converts. The choir was keen and knew what it was about. The soloist was an exceptionally musical young singer, Mr. Roy Henderson, who has learnt a great deal and has reached a high position, one which he can still surpass by making for a still warmer and more elastic quality of tone.

Berlioz's 'Te Deum' provided all the *gross moyens* one could want. It is good to hear such music now and again—always provided that the temperature of the performance is high enough. It is necessary, too, to be near enough to the executants to feel the impact of the sound as almost alarming. Normally the front rows of the stalls at Queen's Hall are a hateful position, but we who were there this time got the fullness of Berlioz. The 'Judeus' chorus was agreeably near being terrible. Mr. Walter Hyde was the soloist, and sang in the right way; only he tried to press the time, making three into $\frac{2}{3}$ in a bar.

The Mozart Symphony was No. 34, in C. C.

THE STRAUSS WALTZES

Though announced as a concert dedicated to the Strauss dynasty of waltz-kings, this event, at the Albert Hall, on April 24, was entirely devoted to the works of Johann Strauss II., the composer of the 'Blue Danube' Waltz. It was conducted by Johann Strauss III., who is the son of Eduard Strauss, and nephew of the most famous of the waltz-kings. True to tradition he conducts with the bow, and displays the animation that has become a legend, with the fluctuations of *tempo* which are so characteristic of Viennese waltzes, but he did not quite succeed in communicating this buoyant spirit to the stolid-looking 'temporary Strauss' orchestra before him, some members of which bore an extraordinary likeness to well-known London players. The Waltzes have lost little of their freshness. 'Viennese blood' still runs warm, and 'Tales from the Viennese Forest' are as racy as ever. Not so the excerpts from the light operas, and least of all those associated with lyrical moments. These are clearly 'dated,' and we turned with relief to the ever-flowing 'Blue Danube.' One of the waltzes, 'Voices of Spring,' was given in its vocal form, the singer being Miss Vilma Delinar, a coloratura who uses a slender voice with much charm, but occasionally 'bluffs' the intermediate notes of an ornamental passage.

E. E.

BEECHAM AND THE L.S.O.

Two Symphonies, by Beethoven and Brahms, given at Queen's Hall on April 25, strike one as a fairly heavy programme until one learns that the former was represented by the 'little' D major, Sir Thomas Beecham's reading of which is as blithe as the spring weather (touch wood!), and the latter by the F major, the middle movements of which are real *moments lyriques*. This Symphony was made to glow with life, the other to leap with joy, so who can say that it was not a delectable evening? Miss Martha Baird, however, was not at her

ease. She was the soloist in Mozart's none too familiar Pianoforte Concerto in G—the one which concludes with a set of variations. That she can play Mozart well has been proved often enough, but this time she was not happy, and Sir Thomas had to recapture the 'atmosphere' in the vivacious Finale.

The novelty of the evening was W. H. Reed's Rhapsody for viola and orchestra, with Lionel Tertis as soloist. A skillful and discriminating use of the familiar romantic idiom, rather than original thought, was the dominant feature of this musicianly and melodious work, to which Tertis's playing imparted a rich glamour. Sir Thomas had memorised this score as well as the others. Of course some will say it was easy for him, with his phenomenal memory; but it shows an attitude of mind not common among conductors.

E. E.

'THE CREATION'

The Royal Choral Society sang 'The Creation' at the Albert Hall on one of the loveliest of spring days (May 7), a day, no doubt, suitable for a joyful celebration of the beginning of all things, but still more suitable for the contemplation of the continuation of the same, or so thought a good many of the R.C.S.'s customary supporters, who left the choir to sing to more empty chairs than usual. The faithful few who were there found Echo taking a louder part than ever in the hymns of praise.

Dr. Malcolm Sargent conducted, and under his vigorous beat the singers did proper service to Haydn, a composer with, we imagine, an assured feature. 'The Creation' is engaging music. Only the mere listener feels he is little out of it. He would like to join in the jubilant strains. Haydn was so indulgent towards chorus singers.

On the other hand, he expected soloists of the very front rank. The three at the Albert Hall were nearly that. But Miss Noel Eadie's singing was not quite as solid as it was pretty; Mr. Walter Widdop (who had stepped in at short notice) wanted a shade more elegance; and Mr. Joseph Farrington's baritone quality is not so good as his bass. His successful descent to D made a great impression on the house.

C.

WILLIAM PRIMROSE

The recital given by Mr. William Primrose at Eolian Hall left some doubt in our mind not so much in regard to his actual abilities as to the future of this brilliant and very promising young violinist. At present his technique is just what it was a little while ago—astonishingly easy and dexterous, indeed brilliant and accomplished to a degree. His readings, however, equally obviously lack maturity and authority. One wonders in the circumstances whether Mr. Primrose will develop best by waiting for concert engagements to come to him or whether he will be courageous enough to seek engagements and experience in the wide world. There is at present a scarcity of inspiring orchestral leaders, owing to the lure of the concert platform. Mr. Sammons, Mr. Catterall, Mr. Beckwith are no longer to be seen leading first fiddles the way they should go, firing them with their example, delighting us all with the exquisite finish of some short but important 'solo.' Surely a good leader is a far greater asset to the community than an indifferent soloist. Had we in our power the shaping of a young violinist like Mr. Primrose we should certainly point to the leadership of a good orchestra as the most desirable end—at present—for there alone can one gain both distinction and experience.

F. B.

THE PURCELL FANTASIAS

Had this been Germany, and the Fantasias a 'find' among the works bequeathed to posterity by some early German master, what a to-do there would have been! Instead of which they were quasi-privately performed in the Tufton Street catacombs, on May 10, and only among the 'inner circles' of the musical world is there talk of them. The Fantasias have been transcribed by Peter Warlock, edited by André Mangeot, and published by Messrs. Curwen, who invited a number of us to hear them played by the International (or Music Society) String Quartet, led alternately

by André Mangeot and Boris Pecker. The performances, frankly speaking, might have been better, but of the great interest of the works there can be no question. They form a remarkable link between the glories of the English tradition at its height and its 'Indian summer' which, a little later, was to turn Purcell Italy-wards in the Sonatas. Much has been said of their 'modernity,' but even the later Tudor classics were in that sense 'modern,' so that this quality is less remarkable than the freshness of outlook which the youthful Purcell (then twenty-two) revealed in a form which his contemporaries were doubtless disposed to regard as 'academic.' Scarcely for a moment was one conscious that a museum had so long been the only building haunted by these flowing sounds. They are anything but archaic, and the German critic who detected the influence of Bach (born five years after they were written) was not so wrong in his judgment as in his chronological sequence, for their quality, despite the older idiom, has something that anticipates Bach's Organ Fantasias.

E. E.

MISS MAY HARRISON

There was much in the playing of Miss May Harrison at Wigmore Hall which appealed to our sympathies. To begin with, there was nothing cheap or commonplace; no tricks of style, no desire to entrap the public with a display of showmanship, no tampering with accepted dogmas, and no pandering to bad taste. Whether she played Mozart or Bach, Miss Harrison's style was always correct, serious, and lofty. This implies a very high technical standard, and, in the main, Miss Harrison was equal to it. Only occasional flaws bore evidence not so much of any lack of skill as of a little uncertainty, due probably to the fact that Miss Harrison does not often play in London—which is a great pity. For, indeed, she is sure of a welcome, especially if she brings with her such things as that admirable Suite in E, of Bach's, unaccountably neglected hitherto by violinists. It is, of course, no new thing to find violinists making for the same goal and playing the same pieces, well knowing that by so doing they lessen their chances of distinction. Indeed, there seems to be something in human nature that compels us to join in the chorus, 'All we like sheep.' But then the glory of those strong enough to stand outside is all the greater, and Miss Harrison deserves half a dozen extra marks for her courage and enterprise.

F. B.

VASA PRIHODA

M. Vasa Prihoda is a violinist who enjoys a considerable reputation on the Continent. Whether this reputation rests on his dexterity—which is remarkable—or on his showmanship—which is even more remarkable—it would be difficult to say. One thing, however, is certain: it is not founded on musicianship. M. Prihoda labours under a heavy handicap, for he is not first in the field. Twenty or thirty years ago another violinist of similar skill and similarly impervious to the finer qualities of music stirred the European public to enthusiasm. Where is Jan Kubelik now? Enjoying, we imagine, harmless country sports in Moravia, or wherever his estates are. We wish equal luck to his successor.

Apart from the usual trifles at the end of the programme, M. Prihoda played two compositions—César Franck's Sonata and Paganini's Concerto. The first was a most lucid exhibition of erroneous phrasing; the second of flawless technique. Would it be unkind to suggest that the place of such a player is in the first desk of an orchestra where a good conductor could curb his ill-directed enthusiasm and attend to his phrasing? It seems to me pretty obvious that this player's gifts are wasted on the concert platform, where, without taste to guide him, his great technical abilities can never be placed at the service of music.

F. B.

BROSA QUARTET

The Brosa Quartet has appeared twice in the past few weeks, and at both recitals the playing suggested qualities which, properly cultivated, should ensure for this Quartet a place in the very first rank. There was neatness of phrasing

and mutual understanding in everything these players did, and whether the composer was Mozart or Dvorák they seemed in complete agreement as to the best way in which the item was to be interpreted. This made for an individuality of treatment which was also perfectly convincing, since it never did violence to the spirit of the music or the tradition. Indeed in Mozart they went further, for they seemed deliberately to cut down anything that might have savoured of modernity—exuberance of tone, boldness of rhythm, and the like. There was plenty of life and plenty of colour, but somehow the life did not seem to run so fast and to be so urgent nor the colour to be so rich as it is to-day. They brought us thus just a little nearer to the spirit of Mozart's music than is the case with other interpreters. Had this been the only special excellence, it would have sufficed to give the performance very unusual distinction. With it, however, went also fidelity of expression and ensemble, which was on a very fair way to perfection.

F. B.

PIANISTS OF THE MONTH

Mr. José Iturbi has had a remarkable success here in London. After two or three recitals he suddenly found himself with a definite public, and one which was loyal enough to wait two hours, while he was flying from Brussels to London. When he arrived at Croydon he was pushed into a taxi, and taken to Aeolian Hall. Tired, worn, and still suffering from the effects of the passage, he walked straightway on to the platform, began his three o'clock recital at five, and played until seven. Even so, the audience asked for more!

The outstanding qualities in this pianist are an incredibly eerie *pianissimo* and a delicately drawn *legato*, which make his Mozart playing an experience of unimpeded delight. Schumann's *'Etudes Symphoniques'* educe a more vigorous style. The quality of tone which he obtained for the climax of the last few bars of this work can only be conveyed by being described as three-dimensional.

Niedzielski is a young pianist who was able at his recital to establish his claim to serious attention. The first part of his programme was devoted to Chopin, and through the discipline of his technique and the intelligence of his expression he was able to persuade us of a personal and sympathetic point of view even in the most hackneyed of the works.

The recital given by Mr. Laffitte, on May 5, was disappointing. It cannot be said that he did more than give a clear and literal exposition of César Franck's 'Prelude, Aria, and Finale.' He did not set out upon the journey with the definite idea of discovering. Even a re-discovery is welcome enough to one condemned to the common round of recitals. Two pieces by John Ireland were included in the recital ('April' and 'Equinox'), but there was little in Mr. Laffitte's performance of them to set up a relationship or a contrast between these works and the rest of the programme. This attitude of 'all things to all composers' makes for the unforgivable sin of dullness.

Mr. Angus Morrison's recital on the next day revealed in him a real sense of style, and a fluency which was especially welcome, seeing that he had elected to play Schumann's 'Humoresque' immediately after Brahms's 'Variations on an Original Theme.' Pianists must be warned against playing Schumann *au hazard* at this time when there is a definite reaction against him. In any case the 'Humoresque' is hardly the work to be used as evidence on his behalf.

What a vigorous and vitalising player is Fanny Davies! To hear her play Brahms is to realise how much his music calls for frankness and plain-speaking. There is something splendid and refreshing in her approach to his music. It was a pity that the recital was marred by a poor performance of the G minor Quartet for pianoforte and strings.

The recital given by Mr. Robert Casadesus, on May 10, served to break the anti-Schumann wave which, as I have said, is encroaching upon us at the moment. 'Kreisleriana' is not by any means a highly inventive work, but this recitalist brought to it such vitality and freshness that familiarity began to breed an unaffected delight. Through his delicate sense of values, each successive phrase springs

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into life and begets the next so naturally that the progression seems to be taking place altogether apart from human agency. It is not till we have arrived at the end of the journey that we realise that it has been directed by an exceedingly fine intelligence.

The second Beethoven recital given by Mr. Evelyn Howard-Jones at Grotian Hall, on May 11, included Op. 109 and Op. 10, No. 3. Here is a serious player in every sense of the word. He avoids heaviness, however, and his clear, incisive tone, leads me to describe his interpretations as being earnest and honest. During the slow movements he is inclined to wander off upon his own private adventure, and forget that the audience is there to receive his communication. This is the least advantageous aspect of his quiet, impersonal manner.

We are indebted to Miss Martha Baird for playing a newly-discovered Minuet of Schubert's at her recital on May 12. It is a wistful little work, and fixes itself in the memory through a curious chromatic turn in the Trio section. Miss Baird played this and two of the 'Moments Musicaux' with a sensitive regard for their fragile structure. I found her Mozart (Variations on 'Come un Agnello') too aloof and non-committal, in spite of the deftness of her touch.

On the same afternoon Miss Hetty Bolton played at Grotian Hall. The Bach group at the beginning of the recital at once revealed her as a pianist of more than average attainment. The rhythmic pulse of the Prelude and Fugue in B flat major (Book 1, 'Well-Tempered Clavier') was delightfully free and natural—not, as is so often the case in Bach performances, a conscious contrivance. The pianoforte recitals of this year (apart from those given by celebrities) have cast me into a gloomy despair through their lamentable lack of inherent rhythm. I am grateful to Miss Bolton for saving me from the darkness of utter pessimism.

B. M.

SINGERS OF THE MONTH

Mr. William Heughan used a bass voice of extraordinary volume in a recital mainly of folk-songs, at Wigmore Hall. He was able to descend to a great depth. 'Si la rigueur,' from 'La Juive,' was not a whit too low for him. And, unlike many basses with heavy voices, he did not pinch his high notes. His words were clear, and although his mannerisms were excessive his singing was never dull. Mr. Heughan saw fit to act his songs. He had the right way with folk-songs but not with *Lieder*. Schubert's 'Death and the Maiden' needed no such aids to effectiveness. (This song was among Mr. Heughan's failures.) Again, Moussorgsky's 'Flea' suffered by this underlining treatment. He proved that you can rob a song of sense by seeking to make its sense too plain.

Miss Gertrude Johnson made a very favourable impression in her first group of Old English songs (Bartlet, Attey, Campion, and Jones) at her Wigmore Hall concert. The demands were nicely met by her light voice. But later on, when there was music demanding a more rich and expansive style, the singing remained little more than pretty. That she is a serious musician was amply proved by her introduction of a difficult novelty, 'Rima's Call to the Birds,' by Cyril Scott (with the Brosa String Quartet), in which she gave the impression, rare in a first performance, of an intimate understanding of the music.

Mr. Leslie Holmes, a Canadian, sang agreeably at Grotian Hall, with a good, warm voice which, however, was rather weak at the bottom and inclined at the top to roughness on open vowels. But we heard real words, and at the same time a good flow of tone. There was some of the inexperience of youth in the rather excessive interpretation given to the 'Doppelganger' and to Strauss's 'Heimliche Auforderung.'

Mr. George Parker sang at Eolian Hall on April 12. Oratorio suits him better than *Lieder*, and nothing he did that night equalled a very beautiful performance one recalled of the A major Aria in Bach's Mass. In Brahms's four 'Serious Songs' there was some fine, earnest singing (particularly in the third of the set), but also some undue roughness. Schubert's 'Nacht und Träume' was one of Mr. Parker's successes, and a rather surprising one, for he

had not prepared us for the command of *legato* necessary for this difficult song. This singer, in fact, puzzled us. He would do a difficult thing aright, and we fancied him safe. Then he would abandon the proper path—the open throat—and become tight and uneasy. He has certainly an uncommon natural gift, and gave every sign of being a keen musician, but he seemed to lack a perfectly clear view of the soundest technical principles.

H. J. K.

An Italian lyric tenor, Signor Tito Schipa, who is said to have a considerable reputation in America, sang at Queen's Hall on May 16. His voice is extremely light, and suitable only for the frailest of songs. He used a sort of head-tone throughout, only varying it with a *mezzo-forte* which was too much inclined to hardness. One would have given much for an occasional full-throated tone, but if anything of the sort seemed likely to appear, it was immediately hushed down to something more fit for a drawing-room. Perhaps Signor Schipa was afraid that his throat would not be open at the right moment.

The singer was brave enough to start his programme with 'O del mio dolce ardor.' Here nervousness or lack of breath caused the phrases to be cut up in a rather unromantic way. 'La Farfalla,' an arrangement by the singer himself, was one of the most successful songs of the evening. It was quick and delicate, and any attempt at the production of heavy tone would have been out of place. The treatment was wholly admirable.

Other songs, in French, Spanish, and Neapolitan, were pleasant so long as they made no demands for a robust style. Handel's 'Where'er you walk' (in English) showed that our language can be sung charmingly even by foreigners. But the number of aspirates introduced into the run on 'glades' was surprising. A good audience gave Signor Schipa every encouragement.

H. O. C.

OPERA AT COVENT GARDEN

Magnificent performances of Strauss's 'Rose Cavalier,' of 'Tristan and Isolde,' and of parts of 'The Ring' and of 'Parsifal,' distinguished the opening weeks of the Covent Garden opera season.

The conductors were Bruno Walter and Robert Heger, a contrasted pair, the former being all vivaciousness and experimental energy, and the latter (entrusted with 'Tristan' and 'Parsifal') a steady-goer, believing in long views and careful construction. The orchestra, a collection of fine players, took some time to form a unity, and though we were grateful for the power and substance of the stream of tone, there was some disappointment with the imperfect polish of the playing. To mention one thing, the brass often did not avoid a quality, in *sforzandos*, that set one's teeth on edge.

On the stage the principal successes were scored by singers who had become known in 1924-26. Some of these reinforced our good opinions of them. The German women are superior to the men, and the basses to the tenors. Frida Leider (Isolde, Brynhilda), Lotte Lehmann (Marschallin, Sieglinde), and Maria Olczewska (Fricka, Brangäne, Waltraute) were again unmistakably great and complete artists—that is, they fulfilled the dramatic requirements, were sensibly musicians, and moreover had a firm hold of sound vocal technics.

On this last score hardly one of the men in the company was their peer. Splendid as were the voices of several of the basses, they were inclined to rely on a punch, on a half-closed throat, to produce an upper note rather than on a stretching of the throat. Even so fine a singer as Friedrich Schorr (Wotan) did not altogether abstain from this practice, and the result was that he was worn out in the last scene of 'The Valkyrie,' and the damage to his organ was perceptible in the high notes of Siegfried.

Madame Leider is indeed an exemplary singer, and a patron of music could do an immense service by engaging her to give demonstrations before vocal aspirants. That Britain is not poor in good voices was shown by the gifted young people who took part as Valkyries, Norns, Rhine-maidens, Flower-maidens, and so on. Some of those singers had the means to undertake the great Wagnerian parts, at some time; but, failing an adequate technique,

there was not a present Isolda or Brynhilda among them. Madame Leider's natural vocal force is not enormous, and one was conscious of the care with which she attacked the most exhausting phrases, but that is about all one can say against her performances—that, and the fact that physically she is less suited to the heroic aspect of the Valkyrie than to the purely womanly. She produced, I think, not one ugly note.

Again the sweet and tender Lotte Lehmann and the handsome, imperious Olczewska commanded our full admiration; while very near them in rank came Delia Reinhardt, Elisabeth Schumann, and Sigrid Onegin. The last, a newcomer, sang Brangäne and Fricka with authority and the weight of a most exceptional voice.

Coming to the men, our enthusiasm cools a little. Nevertheless, several performances were highly admirable. I think most of Herbert Janssen (Kurwenal, Amfortas) and Eduard Habich (Alberich, Klingsor), while also applauding the dignified Schorr, Otto Helgers (Mark, Fasolt, Hagen), whose voice is a truly prodigious organ, Mayr (Ochs, Gurnemanz), whose voice is worn, but who is an actor of rich character, and Paul Bender (Osmin, Rocco).

The name of this last brings us to the Mozart and Beethoven evenings—'Seraglio' and 'Fidelio,' in which the execution was not as satisfying as in Wagner and Strauss. For one thing, both those operas were written more or less experimentally. For another, spoken dialogue in a strange tongue is a wet blanket. In 'Seraglio,' Maria Ivogün was unhappily shaky and off-colour. We had glimpses of her formerly delicious prettiness of style, but if she could sing as weakly as this, there must all along have been some flaw in her equipment. The tenor, Karl Erb, was reasonably good, but of the second rank. He did well as Loge.

In 'Fidelio,' Helene Wildbrunn sang Leonora without satisfying. She has a luscious mezzo-soprano voice, whereas the music asks for an heroic, ringing soprano. Nor was she at all suited to wear a youth's disguise. This misfit spread discomfort over the whole evening.

The Florestan was Fritz Krauss, who sang well when he did not pinch his tone. But the fact that he could not guarantee himself against pinching, puts him in the second rank. The Germans are indeed not lucky in their tenors.

As Parsifal and the principal Siegfried we had Lauritz Melchior, who was certainly an acceptable Siegmund (and in the second 'Ring' really a very good one), but was disappointing in the more exacting parts. M. Melchior has a powerful voice. His soft singing, however, was often insignificant, and the number of his rending, forward upper notes was past counting. He is no actor, and there was little to be said for his Parsifal. A man who can sing Siegmund so well ought to do other things better.

Rudolf Laubenthal (Tristan and Siegfried) was decidedly an artist. The sober excellence of his Tristan and of the 'Götterdämmerung' Siegfried helped much to put the performances of these operas on a high level. Though he had no graces as an actor, and brought no particle of glamour to the scene, he did sing musically. He was not so much of a partner to Madame Leider as a foil, but he was adequate (which, on our experiences of recent years, is saying much), and in 'Götterdämmerung,' Act 3, in particular, he could not be denied a genuine esteem.

The Syndicate this year has behaved handsomely in giving British singers a great many of the smaller parts, a policy which if persisted in will bear good fruit. Lack of opportunity for gaining experience and the rock-like confidence that so much distinguishes the German singers is the cause of the unsatisfactoriness of British operatic singing—not lack of good voices or of dramatic adaptability.

Norman Allin's Hunding stood apart, being, of course, of the first rank. Other British names in the casts included Browning Mummery, Clara Serena, Katharine Arkandy, Harold Williams, Kennedy MacKenna, Henry Wendon, and Philip Bertram.

Competition Festival Record

THE BRITISH FEDERATION OF MUSICAL COMPETITION FESTIVALS

It is a strange and discreditable fact that although practically everybody recognises the immense value of the Competition Festival-movement, the governing body of that movement receives a miserably inadequate amount of financial support. The present position is one that calls for united action on the part of all Festivalites. For some years past the Federation has been in receipt of a grant from the Carnegie Trust. This grant will shortly cease automatically, and so far there is no source of income to take its place. The subscriptions from Festivals and members are not nearly sufficient to maintain the Federation, still less to provide for the growing cost brought about by the steady development of the movement. The reader may ask three questions:

- (1.) What does the Federation do for the Festivals?
- (2.) What do the Festivals themselves do in return?
- (3.) What is suggested as a means of putting the Federation in a sound financial position?

(1.) The Federation is primarily an advisory body, helping in the founding and organization of new Festivals, coming to the rescue of Festivals that have got in a tangle, giving help in the choice of test-pieces, supplying an adjudicator in an emergency, and so forth. It does *not* interfere with the working of Festivals, the aim being rather to encourage committees to develop their activities on lines best suited to local needs and circumstances.

Its beneficent powers do not stop at advice. It also makes grants to struggling Festivals. (Such grants, however, do not necessarily weaken the independence of the recipients; they are often repaid in instalments as circumstances permit.) It issues a well-compiled Year-Book at a nominal cost; maintains a lending library of orchestral music; a graded list of test-pieces, &c. It is run on business lines, at as small a cost as is possible.

The answer to question No. 2 is less satisfactory. Each Festival contributes a small sum annually, directly by way of fee and indirectly through such of its supporters as become members of the Federation. The direct amount cannot well be increased just now, as few Festivals make a profit. But the membership ought to be very much larger than it is at present; and herein lies the answer to the third question. Festival enthusiasts—competitors and regular members of audiences—number a good many thousands. If only a few thousands of this great army would show their appreciation by becoming members of the Federation (minimum annual subscription, 10s.), the future of the movement would be safe so far as money can make it safe.

A PUBLIC DINNER

With a view to bringing the pressing needs of the Federation before the wider public, a Dinner will take place at Hyde Park Hotel on June 24, at 8 p.m. Sir Henry Hadow will be in the Chair, and among the speakers will be Lady Astor, the Earl of Clarendon, and Lord Burnham. Tickets will be one guinea. So far as possible, arrangements will be made to accommodate the diners in parties, at tables seating from seven to twenty people. Various

musical institutions and bodies are being invited to fill one such table. Will a few (not *too* few!) readers of the *Musical Times* join the Editor at a table? If so, they should, when writing for a ticket, notify their desire to join the *M.T.* circle. Early application should be made (if possible by June 10), to the Federation Secretary, Mr. H. Fairfax Jones, 3, Central Buildings, Westminster, S.W.1.

BERKS, BUCKS, AND OXON.—This year's Festival was held at Abingdon (May 14, 18-21). Combined work is an important feature, each day's contests ending early, and being followed by rehearsal and concert. The chief works for massed singing were Dunhill's cantata 'Sea Fairies,' for the children's days, and Besly's concert version of 'Carmen' for adults. A good standard was achieved throughout, a capital feature being the excellent entry of various chamber-music classes. There were five orchestras, including several from schools.

BIRMINGHAM.—Only children (a few up to nineteen, but the bulk of them much younger) were invited to this year's Festival on May 9-13, and as many as seventy-six competitions were devised for their benefit. Entries were numerous. In the choral classes lists running to double figures were a common feature. The choirs of children under eleven, from Birmingham elementary schools, that competed in three classes (boys, girls, and mixed) for the Harding Shield totalled forty-two. The Shield was won by Dennis Road School mixed choir (Mr. W. H. Stones) for the highest marking. The winners in the other sections were Slade Road Girls (Miss E. K. Badcock) and Tindal Street Boys (Mr. T. S. Davies). The chief prize-winners among the older children were Grove Lane Council School (Miss W. A. Bellingham), St. Paul's College Junior Choir, Edgbaston (Rev. Robert Eaton), and Little Green Lane Girls (Miss W. Trow).

CHELMSFORD.—This Festival does not grow as it should; twelve choirs—two more than last year—sent in their entries, but three of them were absentees when the competition arrived. The tests in the chief class were 'Sing ye to the Lord,' Wood's 'Glory, honour, and laud,' and Holst's 'Christmas Day.' The Chelmsford Choir was the best of five that sang this fine choice of music.

CHESTER.—The three days of the Wirral and Eddisbury Festival were devoted respectively to instrumentalists, children, and choirs. Mollington Choir was first in the class open to the whole competition area, the tests being Bach's 'Now praise, my soul,' Wilby's 'The Lady Oriana,' and Elgar's 'Deep in my soul.' Some public criticism was passed on the City of Chester for having no better venue than an inadequate Assembly Room for its competitive Festival.

DORKING.—As usual the Leith Hill Festival (April 26-29) was one of performance as well as competition. Each day's proceedings tended towards a choral and, except on the children's day, an orchestral concert. For adult choirs three extended works were chosen, a part being used as a test-piece and the whole being afterwards performed by a combined choir of competitors. These were Act 2 of Gluck's 'Orpheus' for the less proficient choirs, Stanford's 'Phaodrig Crohoore' for village choirs, and Brahms's 'Song of Destiny' and Stanford's 'Songs of the Fleet' for town choirs. The orchestra, largely of amateurs from the neighbourhood, and some first-class professionals, helped to make an excellent series of programmes by playing Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony and third 'Leonora' Overture, and other works. Mr. John Goss helped the children to enjoy their own concert. The most successful village choirs were Shere in the 'Phaodrig Crohoore' class, and Brockham in various classes. The town choir contests were largely a ding-dong between Dorking Madrigal and Dorking Oriana, with Ashtead taking off the male-voice prize.

DOUGLAS.—The Manx Festival concluded on April 28 with an excellent day of choral singing. The following were the successful choirs: Douglas Festival Choir

(Mr. Noah Moore) in sight-reading (three-part and four-part) and in the open choral society class; Douglas Male Choristers (Mr. Moore); Arbory (Mr. T. C. Corris) in the female-voice and village choir classes; Andreas (Miss E. A. Collins) in a village choir class; and Ramsey Madrigal (Mrs. J. H. Cleator) in the second choral society class. The singing was of the very highest standard, and the public took a great interest in the Festival.

LEWES.—Although this Choral Festival is organized by the East Sussex Federation of Women's Institutes, men are admitted to the competitions, and both male-voice and mixed-voice choirs take part. Forty-six choirs competed. The most successful were those of Westham and Hankham, Plumpton and District, and Lewes St. John's, each of whom won a special prize on aggregate marks. A combined concert performance was also a feature of the Festival.

LEYBURN.—Singers from Bedale were very successful in the Wensleydale Tournament of Song on May 4 and 5. They won the first prizes for choral societies, sight-singing, male-voice choirs, and mixed quartet, and were second to Leyburn in the female-voice class and anthem singing. This was the twenty-third of these Festivals, and the most successful, in spite of some performances that drew extra strong criticism from the judges.

LYTHAM.—In all important matters the twenty-seventh Festival was a success. Moreover, the judges are to be congratulated on winning the kind approval of a writer in the *Blackpool Gazette* for quite a number of their awards! The chief prizes were taken by Dr. Brearley's choir from Blackburn (mixed- and female-voice), and Briercliffe Glee Union (male-voice).

MORECAMBE.—This Festival refuses to expand beyond its traditional three days or to mobilise a five figure army of competitors; yet it remains one of the leading festivals of the kingdom, and as a gathering-point for the best Northern choral singing it is not surpassed. A number of the best-known choirs assembled as usual for the chief competitions, on May 7, and the following were the judges' placings: Female-voices—1st, Barrow Madrigal Society; Male-voices—1st, Colne Orpheus Glee Union; 2nd, Nelson; 3rd, Carlisle and Goodwin. Mixed-voices—1st, Barrow Madrigal Society; 2nd, Sale; 3rd, Carliol. The test-pieces in this last class were the 'Pilgrim's Song' (James Lyon), 'Sweet Suffolk Owl' (Vautour), and 'There is an old belief' (Parry).

ONDLE.—The North Northants Competition, held in the Great Hall of the School on April 22 and 23, produced a healthy list of competing choirs. Some of the singing was of the highest class, particularly that of the Kettering Gleemen in Bantock's 'The Lincolnshire Poacher.' Kettering mixed choir also sang splendidly to win a prize over twelve competitors in Bach's 'Praise Jehovah' and Coleridge-Taylor's 'Drake's Drum.' Oundle Choral Society was best in the chief female-voice section. Miss Isolde Menges and Mr. John Coates joined in the final concert.

PETERSFIELD.—The four days of this Festival comprised one for the children and one each for three batches of adult choirs known as Divisions 1, 2, and 3. Each division of choirs competed amongst themselves and joined in the evening to perform an extended work, part of which had been used as a test-piece. The main features of the four concerts were Cowen's 'John Gilpin,' conducted by Mr. Herbert Wiseman; Handel's sixth 'Chandos' Anthem, under Dr. Adrian Boult, and George Dyson's 'Reveille,' under the composer; Holst's 'Te Deum,' under Mr. Wiseman; Brahms's 'Song of Destiny' and J. L. Lasso's 'Matona, lovely maiden,' under Dr. Boult; Gibbons's 'Hosanna to the Son of David' and Bach's Cantata No. 150, the second 'Brandenburg' Concerto and Holst's Fugal Concerto, conducted by Dr. Boult. Well-known soloists and a capable orchestra assisted in making these occasions memorable for all concerned.

PORTSMOUTH.—In its fifth year this Festival continues to grow, and the three days' competitions (May 5-7) were of continuous interest. The chief prizes were taken by

City Ladies' Choir (Miss K. E. Warner), Stamford Choral Society (Mrs. C. Pike), and Excelsior Temperance Choral Society (Mr. C. Weedon).

SUFFOLK COUNTY.—This year's Festival was held at Bury St. Edmunds (May 13 and 14). There was an increased entry, and good support from the public. The strong side was the choral, excellent work being done by schools, women's institutes (well above the average, these), and mixed-voice choirs. The chief choral contest brought forward fine choirs from Ipswich, Felixstowe, and Bury St. Edmunds, in exacting tests—Bairstow's 'Dawn of Song' and Wilbye's 'Sweet honeysucking bees.' The singing of the winning choir (Ipswich: Mr. W. H. Dixon) in the madrigal would have held its own in many a crack Northern festival. Energetically conducted, and well organized, this Festival is rapidly developing the musical potentialities of districts untouched until a few years ago.

UPPINGHAM.—Selections from Purcell's 'Dido and Aeneas' were chosen as test-pieces for various competitions at the annual Rutland Festival, held here on April 21, and a combined performance was given at the evening concert under Dr. Malcolm Sargent, the programme including 'Sleepers, wake' by choir and orchestra, violin solos by Miss Sybil Eaton, and songs by Mr. John Goss.

WEYMOUTH.—The whole strength of the Dorset Choral Association was concentrated at Weymouth on May 3, when sixty choirs met for final competition in two theatres, a concert-hall, and a dance-hall. The chief successes went to Stourpaine Male-Voice Choir (Rev. C. H. Cooke), Weymouth Baptist Ladies' Choir (Mr. H. Wright), and Dorchester Town Choir (Mr. A. P. Shaw). The proceedings at the final gathering were broadcast.

YORK.—This four-day Festival opened on April 30 and concluded on May 7, choral competitions being held on these two Saturdays. On the opening day the chief prizes for local choirs were won by Mr. E. R. Benton's Ladies' Choir, Grimsby; York Leeman Road Adult School (male voices); and York Old Priory (mixed-voice) Choir. In the open classes held on the concluding day the winners were Newland School Old Girls' Association, York Male-Voice Choir, and York James Street (mixed-voice) Choir. A feature of the Festival was an excellent series of competitions in folk-dancing.

Other competition Festivals held during the week following Easter were the Kent Festival, at CHATHAM (May 7, 11, 14); that of the Stour Choral Union at CHIPPING NORTON (May 3-5); CROYDON, held during the first week of May, with a record entry; the Swaledale Tournament of Song, at RICHMOND (May 10, 11); SCUNTHORPE, where arts and crafts rank with music (May 9-14); the Wilts Festival, at TROWBRIDGE, with a final day set apart for folk-dancing (May 7-14); the Cornwall Competitions, at TRURO (May 10-13); and the Eskdale Tournament of Song, at WHITBY, on May 3-5.

SCOTLAND

ABERDEEN.—The oldest Festival in Scotland has gone rather slowly for several years back, but is showing signs of gathering strength again. At this year's Festival, instrumental classes were again a strong feature, and Scottish country-dancing showed considerable expansion. Principal results: Mixed choirs, L.O.A.S. Choir, Aberdeen; men's choirs, A. Hall & Co.'s Male-Voice Choir, Aberdeen; women's choirs, L.O.A.S. Choir, Aberdeen; church choirs, Ferryhill Parish Church, Aberdeen; junior choirs, Frederick Street Evening School, Aberdeen; school choirs, Mackie Academy, Stonehaven; instrumental solos, Miss Jessie B. Riach (cello).

ARBROATH.—The second Arbroath and District Festival maintained the enthusiasm and interest of its predecessor. Principal results: Mixed choirs, Arbroath Operatic Society; men's choirs, Caledon Male-Voice Choir, Dundee; women's choirs, Arbroath Operatic Society; church choirs, Erskine U.F. Church, Arbroath; junior choirs and school choirs, Townhead Central School, Montrose; country dancing, Fifth Arbroath Girl Guides.

AYRSHIRE Festival, held this year at Ayr, had increased entries and good audiences. Principal results: Mixed choirs, Loudon U.F. Church, Newmilns; men's choirs, Socialist Choristers, Glasgow; women's choirs, Ayr Burgh Choir; vocal solos, Alex. Y. Cameron, Darvel.

DUNDEE.—This Festival, which was on the verge of extinction a year ago, revived strongly this year and justified the optimism of those who refused to pronounce its death-knell. Competition was keen and audiences larger and more obviously interested than before. School choirs and orchestras were again outstanding. Principal results: mixed choirs, Arbroath Operatic Society; men's choirs, Tay Male-Voice Choir, Dundee; women's choirs, Brechin Girls' Club and Martyrs' Ladies' College, Dundee; school choirs, Harris Academy, Dundee, and Blackness School; school orchestras, Dundee School of Music; church choirs, St. John's U.F. Church, Dundee; country dancing, Blackness School.

GLASGOW.—The seventeenth Glasgow Festival ran for more than a fortnight, taking in three Saturdays. There were seventy-eight three-hour sessions, and the competitors numbered 13,600. This included a hundred and one school choirs, forty action-songs and singing games, thirty-one junior choirs, twenty-nine women's choirs, twenty-six men's choirs, thirty-four mixed choirs, twenty-six church choirs, fifty-three vocal quartets, trios, and duets, twenty-three vocal and instrumental ensemble (*Lieder*), five hundred and forty-seven vocal soloists, eighty-eight instrumental ensembles, a hundred and three pianists, thirty-seven violinists, eighty-six country-dance teams, five eurhythmic interpretation, and twelve competitors in choral conducting. Performances as a whole reached probably a higher level than ever before. Mr. Matthew M. Nisbet, a Glasgow bass, set up a new record by winning the Vocal Solo General Diploma and the Vocal Solo Scots Song Diploma, and being placed first in the Operatic Class. Astonishing and affecting performances were given by a choir of blind men and women who competed in one of the ordinary mixed-voice classes, and by several teams of deaf children who competed in the Scottish country dance classes. The Glasgow Orpheus Sangspiel, in the shanty 'Bound for the Rio Grande,' put up an action-song of a quality so unique and a charm so irresistible as to sweep judges and audience alike off their feet. At the final session, eight men's choirs joined in a homeric contest in Elgar's 'The Herald' and Gerrard Williams's 'Come, shepherds, follow me,' only two marks separating the first three choirs. The winners, Queen's Island, Belfast, have cause to congratulate themselves on the surprising leniency accorded to their effort in the compulsory sight-singing test! Principal results: mixed choirs, St. George's Co-operative Choir, Glasgow, Perth Madrigal Society, and the William Morris Choir, Glasgow; men's choirs, Queen's Island Male-Voice Choir, Belfast, Ulster Male-Voice Choir, Belfast, and the Glasgow Philharmonic Choir; women's choirs, Mr. Thorpe Davie's Choir, Glasgow, the Socialist Choristers, Glasgow, and Greenock Festival Choir; church choirs, Radnor Park U.F. Church, Clydene, and Sherwood U.F. Church, Paisley; junior choirs, Dumbarton Equitable Co-op. Choir, and the Glasgow Orpheus Junior Choir; school choirs, Grangemouth High School; orchestras, Ayr Amateur Orchestral Society; country dancing (equal), Shields Road Public School, Glasgow, and the Glasgow Orpheus Sangspiel; vocal solos, Matthew M. Nisbet, Glasgow; violin solos, Miss Jessie M. MacCallum, Glasgow; pianoforte solos, Miss Lois R. Henderson, Bridge-of-Allan.

GALLOWAY.—The eighth Festival was held at Newton Stewart, and kept Dr. Harold Darke busy for two days judging choirs, adult and youthful, Church and school, scout and brownie.

HAWICK.—Here, and at Galashiels, the eighth Border Counties Festival was held, with three hundred and sixty entries, representing over two thousand competitors. Principal results: Mixed choirs, Eldeco Choir, Peebles; madrigal choirs, Lanark Choral Society; junior choirs, Trinity School Former Pupils, Hawick; school choirs, Kelso High School and Duns Public School; country dancing, Jedburgh Grammar School.

INVERNESS, April 28-30.—This year's entry showed a marked increase, and was almost double that of five years ago. Notably good was the school singing. In this department the Festival surely holds the record for long-range entrants, one school coming from Portree, in the Isle of Skye—a distance of a hundred miles—and another from a remote centre eighty miles away. In the Portree choir were many children who had never previously seen a train! Attendances were large, and hundreds were turned away from the final evening session and concert. Community singing was a popular feature.

MORAY (Elgin), May 2-7.—This small town throws itself into the Festival so thoroughly that not only does every evening see the Town Hall crowded, but even the morning and afternoon sessions draw large attendances. Entries were above the average, though the Scots Song classes were surprisingly small. Chamber music was a good feature, and some delightful work was done by the schools.

ROTHESAY.—The third Bute and District Festival ran for over three days, and attracted increased entries and very large audiences. Special features were church choirs and school choirs, and the community singing directed at the final concert by the adjudicators, Mr. F. H. Bisset and Mr. Wilfrid Senior.

WEST LOTHIAN.—The eighth Festival, held at Linlithgow, occupied Dr. Vaughan Williams for three days hearing choral competitions and conducting evening concerts of junior and adult choirs.

IRELAND

BALLYMENA.—On May 2, in the Protestant Hall, the thirteenth annual Ballymena Festival was opened. The number of entries exceeded two thousand (a record), and the sittings continued during the whole week. There were three factory choirs as against one last year; sixty-three other choirs as compared with forty-two; and twenty-two public elementary schools competed as against eighteen. Prof. Bantock praised the junior choirs and their sight-reading.

AT CORK, from April 17-22, there was a Father Mathew Feis, in Father Mathew Hall, when a goodly number of entries displayed an exemplary standard.

DUNGANNON.—The sixth annual Dungannon Musical Festival opened on May 3, and continued until May 7. The children's singing was particularly good.

FATHER MATHEW FEIS.—The Father Mathew Feis—now in its twentieth year—opened at Dublin on Easter Sunday, and lasted a full fortnight. Music was well catered for, although the programme also included sections in domestic science, arts and crafts, dancing, physical culture, &c. The Gore Cup for Voice Production was not awarded, as the standard was not sufficiently high. Miss M. Marshall won the McCullough Cup for playing accompaniments at sight, and Miss N. Walsh (Navan) the Father Mathew Cup, open only to prize-winners. Miss Shiela Kelly, who sang in Irish and Italian, won the Fitzgerald Cup for interpretation. The harp competition was disappointing, as also was the song with violin obbligato. Much was expected from those who competed in the Irish songs, but Mrs. Clandillon, who adjudicated, was not at all satisfied with the standard reached, save in one or two cases. An agreeable prize-winners' concert on May 1 wound up an educational Feis.

THE FEIS CÉOIL.—Commencing on May 2, and terminating with a prize-winners' concert on May 7, at the Theatre Royal, the Feis Céoil of 1927 was a brilliant success. This year's entries, though not up to last year's record, totalled 878, including a hundred and fifty-eight for junior pianoforte, fifty-five for the Plunket Greene Cup, fifty-four mezzo-sopranos, forty-five sopranos, forty-six for the Denis O'Sullivan Medal, thirty-two contraltos, seventeen baritones, and twenty-seven for the Gervase Elwes Cup. There was but one entry—the Dublin Amateur

Orchestral Players, under Mr. Patrick Delaney—for string orchestras, and but two for small orchestras, in which Miss Petite O'Hara's players scored ninety marks. The new competition for sea shanties attracted five entries, the prize being awarded to the Capital Seamen (Miss Culwick). The 'Irish Independent' Choir (Mr. William McGouran) was awarded the Griffith Cup for male-voice choirs—winning the trophy outright—and first prize for male choirs in Irish. The prize for mixed-voice choirs was awarded to the Phibsboro' Musical Society (Mr. Wilfrid Brown); that for ladies' choirs to past pupils of Holy Faith Convent; and for ladies' choirs in Irish to the C.I. Training College. From an historical point of view the competitions for Irish traditional fiddles (senior and junior) and Irish Uilleann pipes (senior and junior) were very interesting, but there was only one entry for the unpublished Irish airs. Once more the need for an adequate concert-hall was very evident, and a combined effort should be made to provide one before next year's Feis Céoil.

PORTRADOWN.—This Festival took place from April 25-30. In all there were four hundred and twenty-eight entries, including thirty-two choirs. The opening day was devoted to verse speaking; Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday to vocal, choral, and instrumental classes; and Friday to children. It was regrettable that local church and school choirs did not participate more fully in the choral competitions. However, Mr. Plunket Greene commended the Spensbury Choir (Mr. W. F. Wood), which secured first prize for Ladies' Choirs (commercial). The chief prize for Ladies' Choirs was awarded to Belfast Choral Union (Mr. S. McDowell); for church choirs to Mary Street Presbyterian Church (Miss M. Sheppard), the only entrant; and for large mixed-voice choirs to Warrenpoint and Rostrevor Choral Society (Mr. G. White). The children's choirs were highly commended by Mr. Plunket Greene.

SLIGO FEIS.—The twenty-fifth annual Feis at Sligo, April 19-23, was a huge success, the entries numbering seven hundred and fifty, somewhat larger than last year. The prize for County Choirs was awarded to Mrs. McMahon's choir. There was but one entry, Mrs. R. Browne's (Enniskillen), for School Choirs. At the end of the fifth day's session there was an enjoyable children's concert.

PRESENTATION TO MRS. T. M. BOURNE

We gladly draw attention to the fund now being organized for the presentation of a testimonial to Mrs. T. M. Bourne, conductor of the Barrow Madrigal Society. Mrs. Bourne has long been a familiar figure in the musical competition world, having led her choir into the arena regularly since its formation in 1900—and not in vain, for the choir has just over a hundred successes to its credit. This quarter of a century of intensive study of fine choral music must have exerted a beneficent influence on the musical taste of the Barrow district, and such a tribute to the conductor ought to be warmly supported. Donations should be sent promptly, as the fund is on the point of being closed. The hon. treasurer is Mr. J. W. Brocklehurst, Midland Bank, 104, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness.

The League of Arts has arranged a series of entertainments, to take place in Hyde Park (north of the Serpentine, between Powder Magazine and Boathouse). The dates are June 4 (community singing, conducted by Geoffrey Shaw); June 11 (country folk-dances, by the E.F.D.S.); June 18 (dance and mime by the Ginner-Mawer School of Dancing); June 25 (Purcell's 'Fairy Queen,' by the Purcell Opera Society); July 2 (a pageant of dancing, by the Karsavina-Fairbairn Academy); and July 9 (sea songs and shanties, by the League Choir, conducted by Geoffrey Shaw). All the entertainments are 'twicers,' taking place at 3 and 7. The former practice of selling tickets outside the Park gates will be discontinued, all the shows being free. The League hopes the audiences will provide the necessary £50 per Saturday by purchasing programmes at 2s., and by donations.

Music in the Provinces

BIRMINGHAM.—Apart from the competitive Festival, noticed on p. 549, the chief musical event has been the City Orchestra Pension Fund Concert, on May 1. Sir Hamilton Harty and Dr. Adrian Boult shared a programme that included the 'Shulamite's Dream' and the 'Dance of Mahanaim,' from Bantock's 'Song of Songs; Weber's 'Abu Hassan' Overture, and three orchestral excerpts from Berlioz's 'Faust.'

BRIGHTON.—Four of the Symphonic String Players gave a chamber concert on May 9. They took part, with Mr. Eric Gritten, in Frank's Pianoforte Quintet, and with Mr. Steuart Wilson in the 'Wenlock Edge' song-cycle and Vaughan Williams.

BUDLEIGH SALERTON.—The principal work performed by the Musical Society, on May 5, was Elgar's 'The Music Makers,' in which the contralto solo was sung by Mrs. Eustace Walker. Stanford's 'Phœbe,' Mozart's 'Jupiter' Symphony, and a Suite for strings by O'Donnell were also in the programme, which was conducted by Mr. S. J. Mundy.

BURY.—Handel's Organ Concerto in B flat was played by Mr. Leonard Faires and the Orchestral Society on May 3, Mr. Percy Hallam conducting.

EASTBOURNE.—Sir Thomas Beecham conducted the annual complimentary concert to Captain Amers, given by the Municipal Orchestra on May 2. The programme included the 'Emperor' Concerto, with M. Arthur de Greef, Tchaikovsky's 'Romeo and Juliet,' and Debussy's 'L'après-midi d'un faune.'

EXETER.—On April 27 the String Orchestra, under Mr. A. J. James, played Parry's 'English Suite' and, with Mrs. Maurice Mather as soloist, a Violin Concerto by Rode.—Schubert's Octet was played at a meeting of the Chamber Music Club on April 29.

EXMOUTH.—A complete concert performance of 'Carmen' was successfully given by the Choral Society, under the direction of Mr. A. Raymond Wilmot, on April 28. The principal parts were taken by Miss Fifi de la Côte, Miss Gladys Palmer, Mr. Gwynne Davies, and Mr. Glyn Eastman.

HASTINGS.—At the Symphony Concert on March 4, Mr. Basil Cameron conducted a Handel Concerto Grosso, the Andante from Debussy's String Quartet, the 'Jupiter' Symphony, and Delius's 'On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring.'

HERTFORD.—An excellent performance of the abridged concert edition of 'Carmen' was given by the East Herts Musical Society on May 5. The principal parts were sung by Miss Mary Hamlin, Miss Margaret Lewys, Mr. Robert Naylor, and Mr. Kenneth Ellis.

KIDDERMINSTER.—A recent performance of 'The Dream of Gerontius' was the greatest achievement of the Kidderminster Choral Society. The choir of eighty, under the direction of Mr. J. Irving Glover, sang with a fine command of the technical difficulties and the expressive atmosphere of the work. Miss Dilys Jones, Mr. John Coates, and Mr. Arthur Cranmer took the principal parts.

NEWBURY.—The programme of the Amateur Orchestral Union's concert, on May 11, included Elgar's 'Enigma' Variations and German's 'Welsh Rhapsody.' The new Newbury Orpheus Society made its first appearance.

NORTHAMPTON.—A well-prepared performance of 'Hiawatha's Wedding-Feast' and 'The Death of Minnehaha' was the principal feature of a successful concert given by the Musical Society, under Mr. C. J. King, on April 29. Mr. Frederick Stock played Beethoven's Violin Concerto.

NORWICH.—A Sonata by Arne, for two violins, bass, and harpsichord, discovered and copied in the British Museum by Mr. Hubert Langley, was played at a meeting of the Norfolk String Quartet Club on April 21.

PENZANCE.—The Orchestral Society celebrated its twenty-first birthday on May 4 with two concerts under Mr. Walter Barnes. The music included Beethoven's fifth Symphony and third Pianoforte Concerto, the pianoforte soloist being Her Highness the Ranees Margaret of Sarawak.

PORTRUSH.—'Elijah' was performed by the North End Choral Society, at the Guildhall, on April 27, Mr. Ernest Birch conducting.

READING.—A Beethoven concert was given by the Philharmonic Society, the University Musical Societies, and the Berkshire Symphony Orchestra, on May 12, before a crowded audience. An admirable performance of the Mass in C was given under Mr. Scrivener. Mr. Probert-Jones conducted the fifth Symphony, and Dr. E. O. Daughtry the 'Egmont' Overture.

REEDHILL.—Raff's 'La fée d'amour,' for violin and orchestra, was played by Miss Gwendoline Higham and the Redhill Society of Instrumentalists, under Mr. W. H. Reed, on April 26. The programme also included de Falla's 'El Amor Brujo.' This concluded the Society's thirty-third season.

SIDMOUTH.—'A Tale of Old Japan' and Parry's 'Ode on St. Cecilia's Day' were performed under Mr. J. A. Bellamy at the annual concert of the Choral and Orchestral Society on April 27.

WOLVERTON.—The Wolverton Science and Art Institute and District Choral Society, conducted by Mr. C. Kenneth Garratt, gave 'A Tale of Old Japan,' 'Hiawatha's Departure,' and Stanford's 'Songs of the Fleet,' before a crowded audience at the Picture Palace on May 4.

BOURNEMOUTH FESTIVAL

The usual spring Festival, sixth of its kind, was held at Bournemouth in Easter week. It began with the weekly symphony concert on Thursday afternoon, April 21, at which Dr. Vaughan Williams conducted his 'Pastoral' Symphony, and Dame Ethel Smyth directed the second performance of her new double Concerto for horn and violin. Elgar's 'In the South' Overture, along with 'Till Eulenspiegel,' completed an entirely modern programme, which, owing to Sir Dan Godfrey's consistently maintained forward policy, brought no frowns to the brows of his enlightened audience. Lighter fare was of course provided at other concerts, of which one had a certain adventitious interest from the fact that the composers represented were all women. Dame Ethel contributed to this concert also—the familiar 'The Cliffs of Cornwall.' The other most substantial pieces of feminine music were a Pianoforte Concerto by Dorothy Howell (the composer appearing as soloist), and two short works by Susan Spain-Dunk. 'The Water-Lily Pool' was first heard at a Promenade concert, and is an effective piece for flute and strings. It was rather spoiled on this occasion by the composer's too restless conducting, and the concert-overture, 'The Kentish Downs,' was also too breezy for a landscape. It is too heavily scored for brass, but in general Miss Spain-Dunk shows fair powers of invention and a distinct feeling for instrumentation. It would have been satisfactory to draw some far-reaching general theory about feminine music from this varied programme; but in point of fact it all sounded like the music of the merest male.

The most important novelty of the Festival was a Suite for strings, by Nicholas Gatty. Cast in the old form and in the classical idiom, but of a richer texture, the work is both scholarly and spontaneous—a rare combination of qualities. Of the five well-contrasted movements, all of them quietly bursting with interesting ideas, the Sarabande is the most immediately captivating.

Among the artists visiting the Festival were Mr. Brosa and Mr. Aubrey Brain, Miss Dora Labelle, Mr. Solomon, who gave a pianoforte recital, and Mr. John Goss with his Cathedral Quartet.

F. S. H.

BEETHOVEN'S FLEMISH ORIGIN

A Brussels correspondent of *Het Vaderland*, the Dutch daily paper, takes the Belgian papers to task for trying to show that Beethoven was of 'Belgian extraction.' It is not clear, he says, how one can call Ludwig van Beethoven, born at Bonn in 1770, and dying at Vienna three years before the coming into existence of the Kingdom of Belgium, either a 'Belgian' or of 'Belgian origin,' even in a country where not long ago protests were made against calling the art of the Van Eycks and the Brueghels 'Flemish,' when they should have been called 'Belgian.' It is certain, however, that the family of Beethoven still lives in the Flemish land. Only a few years ago, since the war, there lived an innkeeper in the Driekoningenstraat, at Berchem, near Antwerp—he may still live there—named Ludwig van Beethoven.

Also at Louvain there seem to be blood relations of the Bonn Master, although they do not bear his name. One of the brothers of the Ludwig van Beethoven who was baptised at St. James's Church, Antwerp, in December, 1712 (grandfather of Ludwig Josef), and who was sixteen years younger, died in November, 1808, at Oosterwijk, in North Brabant, and left two daughters, Anna Theresa and Maria Theresa. The latter married in September, 1808, Jozef Michiel Jacobs, from which marriage four children were born. The eldest son, Jacob Jacobs, settled at Antwerp, and made a name as a landscape painter, but died childless. The fourth son of Jozef Michiel was born at Antwerp and died at Louvain. He married Maria van Hoof, and had one son, Alphons Jacobs, writer of various monographs on the subject of Louvain and its environs. He married Laria Leonie van Mol-Ectors, and had four children, of whom two were sons, Sylvain and Ludwig. The elder died in 1907, at Antwerp, and left two children, Jan and Maria. Ludwig is still living, and now resides at Louvain. He has four children, Leo, Norbert, Marie Louise, and Steven, of whom the eldest is an occasional contributor to a French paper at Brussels.

SALE OF THE WILHELM HEYER COLLECTION
AUTOGRAPHS BY MUSICIANS

Part of the rich collection of musical manuscripts from the music-historical museum of Wilhelm Heyer, Cologne, was sold by auction on December 6 and 7, at the house of K. E. Henrici, Berlin. Buyers from all parts of the world had flocked together in the hope of securing a prize from what Dr. G. Kinsky, in a preface to the catalogue, justly describes as 'a mass of such precious music manuscripts as has scarcely ever before been offered for sale at an auction.' This sale, which comprised hardly a quarter of the whole collection, realised £9,000, although several important numbers were withdrawn on account of not reaching the reserve price.

The highest sum—£750—was paid for Beethoven's clean copy of his Sonata in F sharp major, Op. 78, by an unnamed Swiss collector, who also secured the following Beethoven autographs: The trombone parts of the ninth Symphony, for £500; a memorial of forty-six pages to the Vienna Court of Appeal respecting the guardianship of his nephew, £320; one of the rare note-books by which the deaf master carried on his conversations, £326 10s.; and three interesting letters to Kanka, Blochlinger, and Schuppanzigh, for £125, £145, and £57 respectively. Eight pages of sketches for improvisations fetched £182 10s. On account of the high prices the Beethoven house at Bonn had to content itself with the acquisition of three folk-songs, £107 10s., and two Bagatelles from Op. 110, £90. The beautiful autograph of Bach's Organ Prelude and Fugue in B minor went to Leo S. Olschki, Florence, for £730; a receipt by Bach went for £42 10s.; and Baron von Vietinghoff bought Bach's Partita in E flat, for lute, for £135, as well as Brahms's Sonata in F minor, Op. 5, for £152 10s. The latter master's Paganini Variations fetched £90, and eighteen letters to Bartholf Senff, £36 10s. Of the forty very rare letters by Gluck, five were sold for £40, and some Haydn letters for an average price of only £20. There were two music autographs by W. A. Mozart—a March for orchestra (Köchel, No. 408/1), which was sold for £125, and the

lovely Rondo in D major (Köchel, No. 485), for £150. Two of his letters sold for £112 10s. One of these (dated April 4, 1787), the last letter to his father, who was seriously ill at the time, and died on May 28, contains the following remarkable passage, which reads like a presentiment of his early death:

(*Translation*) 'As death (correctly taken) is the true final purpose, I have for the last few years familiarised myself so far with this true friend of mankind that his image has not only lost all its terrors for me, but it has even much that is calming and consoling! And I thank my God that He has granted me the good fortune of giving me the opportunity to find in Him the key to our true felicity. I never go to bed without the thought that perhaps (young as I am) on the following day I may be no more—and, of all who know me, surely none can say that I am morose or melancholy—and for this happiness I thank our Creator every day, and with all my heart I wish it all my fellow-men.'

The score of Schubert's 'Miriam's Song of Victory,' thirty-four pages, was sold for £250, two smaller MSS. for £55 and £67 10s. respectively, and a letter to his friend Hüttenbrenner, for £50. Mendelssohn's 'Hebrides' Overture, in its first form, fetched £420, a movement for string quartet, £43; Schumann's first Symphony (with sketches thereto), £440, and his melodramatic Ballads, Op. 122, £28; two Violin Concertos by Paganini, £55 10s. each, his 'Witches' Dance,' £48, and an unpublished Tarantella, £38; Chopin's Polonoises, Op. 40, £142 10s.; Impromptu, Op. 51, £67 10s.; a Flute Sonata by Frederick the Great fetched £100, and the same amount was paid for the piano-duet arrangement of Smetana's 'Bartered Bride'; a Swabian dance-song by C. M. von Weber was sold for £215; Reger's Burlesques for piano-duet, Op. 58, £16; Richard Strauss's song, 'Kling,' realised £21; Hugo Wolf's 'Liederstraus' (six songs to Heine's words, of which three are still unpublished), £25 10s.; a manuscript music book, with three original piano-forte pieces, and a number of copies of pieces by various composers, by Georges Bizet, written in his student days, £75 10s. Two important music manuscripts by Wagner found no buyers, and a large number of his letters sold at only moderate prices. The six hundred and thirteen numbers sold at the auction comprised so many great names and extremely interesting items that it would fill a book to describe them all. We must, therefore, content ourselves with the above-mentioned as giving an idea of the importance of the collection and the present-day valuation of the manuscripts.

E. V. D. S.

THE CASADESUS COLLECTION OF OLD
INSTRUMENTS

The Boston Symphony Orchestra, in October last, acquired by presentation the valuable collection of ancient instruments formed by Henry Casadesus, player of the viol d'amour and founder of the Société des Instruments Anciens. It will be remembered that in 1908 the Société delighted London audiences by its concerts of 17th- and 18th-century music. This rare collection, which comprises some hundred and forty-five examples, was purchased from Casadesus by a number of friends of the late Major Henry L. Higginson, for preservation as a memorial of the munificent patron who was founder and, for many years, sustainer of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The collection is housed in a room in Symphony Hall, where it is accessible for inspection by the concert audiences. The plan of the exhibition was primarily conceived by Koussevitzky, the double-bass player and friend of Casadesus, in whose recitals he often took part. Among the instruments there are some of uncommon interest, viz., a very fine viol d'amour, by Paul Alletse, Munich, 1713, that once belonged to Joseph Joachim, and upon which Casadesus played in Loefller's 'La Mort de Tintagiles,' at St. Louis, in 1918; a rare chamber-bass (small violon); a trumpet

marine; a basshorn-serpent in bassoon form, with brass dragon head, by Rust & Dubois, Lyons, late 18th century; a richly-embossed 16th-century church serpent, by Pellegrino di Azzi, with the arms of the Venetian Republic; a richly-decorated French vielle, early 18th century (?); a pochette by André Vinette, 1612; and a unique 18th-century tabor of la Provence. Also there is a curious stringed specimen, about a foot in length and three inches wide at the top, with forty-nine rather thick strings. The body is of wood, darkened with age, which testifies to its great antiquity. A yellowed piece of parchment pasted on the back is covered with minute Chinese lettering, which has not yet been deciphered, nor has any connoisseur so far succeeded in classifying the instrument.

E. V. D. S.

Music in Scotland

EDINBURGH.—Edinburgh contrives still to keep two local grand opera enterprises going. The Edinburgh Opera Company, of which Mr. Ralph T. Langdon is conductor and the veteran Mr. E. C. Hedmond producer, gave a week of opera, alternating 'Carmen' with 'Freischütz.'—The Edinburgh Grand Opera Company elected to produce 'Tannhäuser' and Goldmark's 'Queen of Sheba.' Mr. R. de la Haye conducted, and Mr. Hebdon Foster was producer.

GLASGOW.—Although coming at the end of the season, the production (probably for the first time in English anywhere) of Rameau's opera, 'Castor and Pollux,' at the Lyric Theatre, Glasgow, was an event of major importance. The enthusiasm of a group of Glasgow amateurs, with Mr. Guy F. McCrone as hon. secretary, brought the project to a successful issue with the backing of a large body of guarantors, and four highly-interesting performances were given, with Mr. R. Hutton Malcolm as conductor and Mr. Parry Gunn as producer. Mr. Parry Gunn's quaint Watteau-cum-Louis scheme of production was particularly happy.—Mr. William Heughan, a Scottish basso of the singer-talker-actor type, who has acquired a considerable reputation on the other side of the Atlantic, gave three varied vocal recitals at the Lyric Theatre, Glasgow, and had quite a pleasant reception from the very restricted number of people who can be induced to attend a vocal recital indoors in the merry month of May.—The Glasgow Choral and Orchestral Union (Scottish Orchestra concerts) has made a call of four shillings in the pound on its guarantors, to meet the deficit of nearly a thousand pounds on the past season.—An interesting event was the performance at the British Broadcasting Corporation Studio of 'The Dear Saxon,' an operatic pasticcio, the music being selected and arranged by Mr. J. Michael Diack from unfamiliar works of Handel, with a connecting story and appropriate words. Mr. Diack has a genuine gift for discovering, adapting, and inventing lyrics, and wedging these to old music. With the assistance of the B.B.C. Glasgow Station orchestra and chorus (augmented) and a competent cast of principals, he directed a performance which gave no small amount of pleasure to those invited to be present, and to the larger public between Land's End and John-o'-Groats who listened in. With its spoken dialogue livened up, there is no reason why 'The Dear Saxon' should not make a considerable stage success.

PERTH.—A recently-formed Choral Society, drawn from the staff of the General Accident Assurance Corporation, made a first public appearance at a concert given by the Society at Synod Hall. Mr. T. Clough conducted the choir in a number of unaccompanied part-songs, and the programme included some quaintly old-fashioned songs of the 'Anchored' type. Mr. Clough must see to this!

The secretary of the Bach Cantata Club announces that the St. Michael's Bach Society, Croydon, has become affiliated to the Club. It is hoped that this is only the beginning of a series of affiliations all over the country.

Music in Wales

ABERYSTWYTH.—The College weekly concerts were resumed on April 21, when Prof. de Lloyd arranged a special programme for the benefit of old students who were spending their Easter holiday in the town. Schubert's 'Rosamunde' Ballet Music and the Finale from Haydn's 'Oxford' Symphony were played by the orchestra. Dr. Adolph Brodsky, who happened to be a visitor, most kindly volunteered to assist, and led in Beethoven's String Quartet, Op. 18, No. 6, besides playing Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto. On April 28, Schubert's String Quartet in A minor and Dohnányi's Sonata for violin and pianoforte formed the instrumental items, the latter played by Miss Evelyn Cooke and Mr. Charles Clements. Miss Gwen Price gave a vocal recital, which included a much appreciated group of Welsh folk-songs.—The members of the children's violin classes recently gave an interesting concert conducted by their two teachers, Miss Dilys Lodwick and Mr. Kenneth Harding. The items included arrangements for string orchestra of a Suite in D, by Mozart, MacDowell's 'Woodland Sketches,' and some small numbers by Handel. Two daring young players attempted a movement from Bach's Double Concerto, and revealed considerable gifts. Another group played a movement from a Haydn Quartet. These classes were started some years ago under the auspices of the National Council of Music, and the standard of performance has advanced continuously.—For the approaching Aberystwyth and Cardiganshire Festival, on June 21, 22, and 23, Beethoven's Mass in D, his Choral Symphony, and the Violin Concerto have been chosen, as well as Mendelssohn's 'St. Paul.' The conductors will be Sir Henry Wood, Mr. Edward German, Dr. David de Lloyd, and Mr. J. T. Rees.

BANGOR.—The weekly concert at University College, on March 17, was devoted to Beethoven, and comprised movements from String Quartets in B flat, Op. 18, and F, Op. 59, the 'Archduke' Trio, and the Sonata for violin and pianoforte, in C minor. At the concert on April 21, Miss Kathleen Washbourne and Miss Enid Lewis gave a violin and pianoforte sonata recital, and played amongst other items the 'Kreutzer' and Elgar Sonatas. The programme on April 28 included Violin Sonata in A (Bach), Pianoforte Quartet in E flat (Beethoven), the John Ireland 'Cello Sonata, and a Dvorák Slavonic dance, in trio form. At the hundred and thirty-eighth weekly concert, on May 5, McEwen's 'Biscay' Quartet, Handel's Sonata for flute and pianoforte, together with a highly interesting Pianoforte Quintet, 'Phantasie' (founded on an old Welsh melody), by Kenneth Harding, were performed by the College Trio, Miss Daloni Seth-Hughes (a student, viola), and Mr. W. M. Tipping (flute). The chief musical event of the present term was the Beethoven Centenary concert, on May 11, which formed the climax of a series of Beethoven concerts and lectures given during the session. The College Choral Society and the Bangor Orchestral Society (specially augmented in the wood-wind and brass by well-known players from Manchester and Liverpool), with Mr. Norman Allin as vocalist, presented a programme containing Beethoven's 'Creation's Hymn,' the Choral Fantasia (with Miss Enid Lewis in the solo pianoforte part), Rocco's song from 'Fidelio,' and the C minor Symphony, Vaughan Williams's 'Toward the Unknown Region' (sung with intelligence and fine expression), 'The Lark ascending' (beautifully played by Miss Kathleen Washbourne), 'Der Freischütz' Overture, and songs by Mozart, Glinka, Moussorgsky, and Leewe. The audience included hundreds of students from the Bangor Colleges, who showed the keenest appreciation of the varied items. Mr. Norman Allin, who was paying his first visit to Bangor, received a great ovation. Mr. E. T. Davies, the College director of music, conducted throughout, and secured an impressive interpretation of the Symphony.

—On May 13 upwards of a hundred women interested in the organization of music classes and choirs in the Women's Institutes and Y.W.C.A.'s in the various counties of North Wales, met at University College to receive instruction and guidance in their work. Mr. E. T. Davies, who directed

the proceedings, gave a series of short lectures, which included choir training and conducting. The College Trio and Quartet played a carefully chosen programme of chamber music, and all those assembled joined in folk-songs and part-songs prepared for the occasion.

BRIDGEND.—Sir Walford Davies addressed an audience of school teachers at the Presbyterian Church Hall, and later gave a public lecture on Handel and Beethoven.

BRYNAMMAN.—On May 6 and 7 the Brynaman Operatic Society gave successful performances of 'The Mikado.' The musical director was Mr. Edward Evans, and the Brynaman Orchestra was led by Mr. E. R. Williams.

CARDIFF.—At the opening of the Cardiff Museum by The King, on April 21, a considerable programme of music was performed under the direction of Sir Walford Davies. Choral items included a 12th-century Welsh hymn in the original Welsh ('Glorious Lord, hail to Thee'), set to music of a mediaeval church character by Sir Walford, several modern Welsh hymns, Mendelssohn's 'Above all praise,' two Palestrina Motets, and harmonized arrangements of Welsh songs and folk-tunes. Orchestral items included two Handel Overtures and the 'Meistersinger' Overture. The choir consisted of the Cardiff Choral Society, supplemented by representatives of a large number of choirs in Wales. The Romilly Boys' Choir, conducted by Mr. W. M. Williams, gave a selection of part-songs, and the Cardiff Broadcasting Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Warwick Braithwaite, assisted.—The University College chamber music concerts were resumed on April 30, when Schubert's Trio in B flat for pianoforte, violin, and 'cello (Op. 99), and Mozart's Trio for the same combination, were played by the College Trio. Miss Joan Willis played Boëllmann's Symphonic Variations for 'cello, and Miss Nina Jones contributed some pianoforte solos by Brahms and Chamainade.—On May 7, Beethoven's Trio in C minor (Op. 1, No. 3) and Brahms's Trio in B major, both for pianoforte and strings, were given, and Bach's Sonata in A was played by Mrs. David Evans (violin) and Mr. Joseph Morgan (pianoforte).—On May 13, Dr. J. B. McEwen distributed prizes to local music students, under the auspices of the Associated Board of the R.A.M. and R.C.M. Referring to the popularity of gramophones and wireless, he warned his hearers against the danger of becoming mere listeners and not performers. Examinations provided an incentive to capable effort, and were valuable as a stimulus to something more than the rôle of only a listener to the efforts of others.

GARW.—Sir Walford Davies gave an afternoon lecture at the Garw Secondary School and an evening lecture to the general public, on Handel and Beethoven. Illustrations included Beethoven's Pianoforte Trio in E flat, Handel's 'Cello Sonata in G minor, and a Gavotte in E by Bach, the executants being the lecturer (pianoforte), and Messrs. W. H. Jenkins (violin) and R. Harding ('cello). In the afternoon the School Orchestra, under Mr. John Edwards, played very creditably.

HAWARDEN.—When recording the performance of 'The Dream of Gerontius' last month we omitted to mention that the choir consisted of girls and boys of the County School, together with old scholars and the staff. The headmaster says, 'We have discovered what is little known, the wonderful material there is in the older girls of our County Schools. They can sing anything.'

LLANGADOC.—On April 21 the Providence Church Augmented Choir gave 'Judas Maccabeus,' assisted by the Brynaman and Llangadoc Orchestras, under the baton of Mr. W. J. Gravelle.

NEWTOWN.—The seventh Montgomery County Music Festival took place on May 12, and was a great success. Twenty-two choirs, numbering about a thousand voices, assembled from the towns and villages of a wide area, and large audiences went to the afternoon and evening sessions. The afternoon programme included Berlioz's 'Rakoczy' March and Wagner's 'Meistersinger' Overture; homage was done to Beethoven's memory by the inclusion of the

first two movements of the seventh Symphony, which were listened to with rapt attention. The Adagio and Finale from his Trio for pianoforte, violin, and 'cello in G (Op. 1), which were beautifully played, and two choral numbers, 'The heavens declare' and 'Hallelujah,' from the 'Mount of Olives.' Mendelssohn's 'Hear my Prayer' was well sung, with Miss Ida Cooper as the soloist. In the evening 'Judas Maccabeus' was performed with much precision, though insufficient attention was paid to the softer nuances of expression. The principals were Miss Ida Cooper, Miss Ethel Dakin, Mr. Trefor Jones, and Mr. Harold Williams. In the afternoon Bach's 'In tears of grief' was very beautifully interpreted in memory of the late W. H. Leslie, an ardent supporter of the Festival and a keen worker in the cause of music in Montgomeryshire. The conductors were Dr. Adrian Boult and Mr. W. R. Allen.

GENERALLY.—With the coming of spring and early summer, and the improving conditions of weather and roads, the country becomes alive with singing Festivals ('Cymraeodd Canu'), for which preparation has been made during the long nights of winter. Often these Festivals consist almost entirely of hymns, but in many cases the programmes contain Church anthems and choruses from the oratorios, which are eagerly studied, not only by the choirs taking part, but by their friends, who become interested and critical hearers on the great day, an occasion that is often observed as a general holiday in the district. Largely owing to these Festivals many congregations are well able to take part in the anthems as well as the hymns in their places of worship.

Music in Ireland

BELFAST.—At a meeting of the Senate of Queen's University, on April 14, it was resolved to include in the matriculation course in 1928 a regulation making music for the first time an optional subject for matriculation.—Thirty-two bands competed at the annual band contests at Portadown, on April 19, the adjudicator being Lieut. Ord Hume. St. Catherine's, Newry, won the brass and reed bands contests, the senior brass bands section being awarded to the 55th Old Boys' Silver Band (Mr. J. M'Fadden), Belfast. The melody flute bands (twenty performers) section was won by Ballykeel Flute Band (Holywood), and the prize for senior flute bands (forty performers) by the Ulster Amateur Flute Band, Belfast (Mr. W. Blythe).—A Hymn Festival was held in Ulster Hall, on April 27, when a massed choir of four hundred voices, conducted by Prof. Evans (Cardiff), sang hymn-tunes from the 'Revised Church Hymnary' for the Presbyterian Church. The Moderator of the General Assembly presided. In addition to some Bach chorales, several of the new tunes made a strong appeal. Mr. T. H. Crowe gave valuable help at the organ.—As a result of the annual contests to select bands to play in the Belfast public parks during the summer, at Ulster Hall, on April 23, with Lieut. Ord Hume as adjudicator, First Lisburn Temperance Band (Mr. J. M'Fadden) was awarded first place for brass bands; Ulster Amateur (Mr. W. Blythe) first for flute bands; and Ormeau Amateur Military (Mr. J. Bell) first for brass and reed combinations.

DUBLIN.—On April 24, at La Scala Theatre, No. 1 Army Band, under Col. Fritz Bräse, gave an enjoyable concert, including some delightful tenor solos by Mr. Norman O'Connell Redmond.—During the week April 25-30, the Rathmines and Rathgar Musical Society, at the Gaiety Theatre, presented 'Trial by Jury,' 'The Pirates of Penzance,' and 'The Yeomen of the Guard,' under the capable direction of Mr. T. H. Weaving, who has conducted the Society for ten years.—On April 27 an excellent choral concert, under the direction of Mr. Hubert Rooney, was given by the Civil Service Musical Society at Metropolitan Hall.—The *Daily Express* boost of community singing in the shape of a free

concert at the Theatre Royal, on May 1, naturally attracted a vast audience. Sir Richard Terry conducted the mass singing, and Mr. John Goss and Mr. George Garner led the choruses. Dr. Malcolm Sargent conducted a special symphony orchestra. The Governor-General and party were received by Mr. T. S. Darlow, representing the *Daily Express*, and the audience responded well to the vigorous conducting of Sir Richard. — The Dublin Choral Festival was held in Christ Church Cathedral, on May 3, when thirty-three choirs (four hundred voices) took part. Among the features were community singing of popular hymns, Irish hymns, and descants, under the direction of Canon Wilson, Precentor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, with Mr. T. H. Weaving at the organ. — The Executive Committee of the Feis Ceoil offered £50 to the Philsborough Musical Society, winner of the mixed-voice choir competition, towards its expenses in competing at the Eisteddfod, at Holyhead, in August. A similar offer made to the winning ladies' choir was declined. A report of the Feis Ceoil appears in another column.

nothing to do with traditional opera. It is based on faith and sincerity, which, on the whole, do not play an essential part in conventional art. It is more than natural that a man like Bruno Walter should devote particular care to 'Fidelio,' though he observes the bad custom of giving the third and great 'Leone' Overture before the last scene. Everybody knows that this symphonic piece is outside the scheme of the opera, of which it may be said to be the quintessence. But it is difficult for a conductor, even of the calibre of Walter, to abandon a custom that evokes so much applause for the performer.

ADOLPH WEISSMANN.

HOLLAND

Beethoven has naturally formed the subject of most of the programmes during the past month, and we have had some excellent performances of the 'Missa Solemnis' under Prof. Richard Stronck, of the Symphonies under van Anrooy and Monteux, and of the Quartets by the Capet Quartet, besides many smaller events. There has never been the fluctuation in the position of Beethoven that has occurred elsewhere, so that a Beethoven programme is a sure draw on all occasions. The month has not, however, been a good one from the concert promoter's point of view, and even so popular an artist as Frederic Lamond suffered at his last recital from a half empty hall. Of even greater interest than the Beethoven Centenary to the average Dutch concert-goer has been the return of Mengelberg, 'our Willem,' after the ear trouble brought on by influenza. He has directed at Amsterdam very fine performances of the first and third Symphonies and the 'Coriolan' Overture. There was, however, a disappointment even in this programme, for Mahler's 'Lied von der Erde,' which in itself will attract an audience that overflows the largest halls in the country, had been announced and had to be abandoned owing to the illness of Jacques Urlus, who was to have sung the tenor solo. For the corresponding concert at The Hague, two days later, a tenor from Cologne had been found, who, with tremendous strain and not very satisfactory results, went through the part. Leaving this aside, the performance was a magnificent one in every respect. On the question whether the music is worth the trouble taken by such artists as Mengelberg and Ilona Durigo, I am entirely at variance with most people here. I made a particular point of listening carefully and as sympathetically as possible to Mengelberg's interpretation, in the hope that it would remove the unfavourable impression I had previously received. Alas, the result was just the reverse. The fine performance only intensified the feeling that the music is unoriginal, sordidly misanthropic and pessimistic, and altogether about as poisonous as it is possible for music to be. The words express the unspiritual fatalism of certain Eastern people, but their mood is intensified and made worse by the music. There are, of course, some points of beauty, and the orchestration is as masterly as a thorough knowledge of the work of the great masters and great personal skill could make it. Yet for all that it is the music of morbid madness.

Among the younger European composers one of the most frequently heard here is Arthur Honegger. The first performance at Amsterdam of his Concertino did not, however, make the expected impression, possibly because of its unfavourable position between Schumann's fourth Symphony and the 'Romeo and Juliet' fragments of Berlioz's. The concert on the whole was a triumph for Monteux, and the Concertino a brilliant success for the soloist, Yvonne Herr-Japy.

The Dutch and Italian opera seasons have both come to an end, the former achieving its zenith—not yet a high or brilliant one—in some well-intentioned and in several respects well carried out performances of 'Samson and Delilah' and 'The Magic Flute,' the latter having given consistently good performances of a number of standard works, as well as having introduced here with great success 'L'amore de Tre Re' and 'Gianni Schicchi.'

HERBERT ANTCLIFFE.

Musical Notes from Abroad

GERMANY

BEETHOVEN COMMEMORATIONS

It would indeed have been well if, in Germany, the native country of Beethoven, not a single line of his music had been played on his Centenary, for the misuse of this Master in German concert-rooms has been such as to represent a Beethoven programme—for the average concert-goer endowed with critical gifts—as the most problematic of musical enjoyments. It is only the Master's chamber music that preserves, at least in its last phase, its drawing power on the concert-going public. And herein we find what we may call the Beethoven problem that waylays the present generation. Many people had lost their Beethoven before they came to know him. The younger composers do not care for him. Of course, they fully acknowledge his greatness, which allows him to be commemorated after a hundred years, and they are fully persuaded that after another century very little will be left of what is being created to-day; but they are living, and Beethoven is dead.

A literary magazine, *Die literarische Welt*, has gathered a large number of opinions by modern composers concerning Beethoven, in the light of the present. The outcome is rather depressing. Yet at the same time a man like Schönberg, intimately connected with the last Beethoven both in his conceptions and in the texture of his music, is discovering new beauties in the work of his forerunner. For him, the Master has greater vitality than he has for many musicians of to-day. He attaches special value to the Beethovenian kind of thematic development. Beethoven, as seen from this angle, is Schönberg's idol.

On the other hand, 'Beethoven for the people' is, in Germany, gaining more and more ground. The most impressive Beethoven commemoration of all held in these weeks was that undertaken by Artur Schnabel, who, on seven Sunday forenoons, gave a synthesis of the whole Sonata works of Beethoven, without adhering to chronological order. This took place in the Volksbühne, before crowded houses of working people drawn from the lower classes of population, who were absorbed in what most probably they heard for the first time. If, some years ago, the pianoforte served as a means of propaganda for classical music, it has come to be superseded by the ubiquitous radio. Thus was it the more remarkable that so deep an impression was produced on his hearers by Artur Schnabel, preaching a Beethoven gospel in the most solemn and authoritative way.

Other impressive acts of commemoration were the performance of 'Fidelio' by the Municipal and the State Opera Houses. 'Fidelio' has never fallen into misuse, because it stands out of the repertory as a work that has

TORONTO

The past two months have been busy ones for music-lovers, and have afforded a better variety of concert than at any other time during the season. The major event, of course, was the Mendelssohn Choir Festival, bringing, as it did, an opportunity to confirm the favourable impressions gained last year of the work of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Fritz Reiner and his men have left behind them this year the enviable reputation of being one of the few orchestras on this continent temperamentally and artistically fitted both for choral accompaniment and virtuoso work. Mr. Reiner made history with his sound and at the same time brilliant performance of the ninth Symphony, and Dr. H. A. Fricker achieved the triumph of his career when, on February 25, he conducted the Beethoven 'Missa Solemnis.'

The National Chorus, singing with its familiar charm and purity, gave a delightful evening of unaccompanied numbers, Dr. Albert Ham obtaining impressive effects in the Palestrina 'Stabat Mater,' 'The Hymn to the Sun' (Chapuis), and Elgar's 'Death on the Hills,' and in shorter works.

Mr. Thomas J. Crawford has put new life into the Eaton Choral Society, Toronto's leading departmental store choir, to such effect that a capacity audience enjoyed a remarkably smooth performance of Coleridge-Taylor's 'A Tale of Old Japan,' with Miss Jeanne Dusseau, Madame Elizabeth Campbell, Alfred Heather, and Arthur Blight as the quartet of soloists.

It remained, however, for a small group of choir-boys from Westminster Abbey, and a few adult Gentlemen of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, to take this city by storm, musically. Never within memory has choral work created such a stir as when these collegiate choristers gave three sacred and one secular performance of the finest English traditional works. Crowds were turned away on each occasion, and the thousands who were fortunate enough to gain admittance to the various churches, and to Massey Hall, heard such singing as will live long in their memory for the finest and purest that it is possible to imagine.

VIENNA

THE BEETHOVEN CENTENARY FESTIVAL

Of the Beethoven festivities held during the last month in every musical centre of the world, none perhaps held a stronger significance, both outwardly and inherently, than that at Vienna. The outward importance of the celebration was demonstrated by an influx of foreign visitors who exceeded all expectations for numbers and distinction. True that the character of the official foreign delegates—no less than thirteen Government representatives from all portions of the globe contributed addresses to the opening meeting—was not quite in keeping with a musical festival, for with the exception of Italy, whose representative was Mascagni (a musician worlds removed from the spiritual sphere of Beethoven and the classics), the Governments had delegated not musicians but politicians and diplomats. Consequently at the start the Festival bore the external character of a 'musical Locarno' more than of an historic event. The presence of such distinguished statesmen as M. Herriot or M. Vandervelde, however gratifying in itself, scarcely atoned for the general tenor of the addresses, which hardly exceeded the limits of international courtesy, and contained only more or less casual remarks on the art of Beethoven delivered in a more or less pathetic style and in a more or less similar verbal matrix. The unbiased observer could but wonder if such 'official' pathos was quite in keeping with the essence of Beethoven's life-work.

Surely Beethoven could have been spared the patronizing laudations so profusely bestowed upon him! Were he alive to-day he would find them even less to his taste than the frivolous, flippant sarcasm which certain exponents of the 'young French school' have chosen to mete out to the Master on the occasion of his Centenary. If a diversion may be pardoned, it is perhaps not without interest to quote some of the 'views' which a few young (and less young) exponents of modern French music have seen fit to publish in the March 25 issue of the widely-read German

periodical, *Die literarische Welt*. It is surely amusing to learn that M. Jean Wiener, the well-known jazz pianist, considers Beethoven 'to-day an isolated figure without any relation to modern musical ideals, who has suddenly lost his vogue since the advent of Stravinsky'; and it is cheerful to hear the verdict of M. Georges Auric, best known as a composer of short sketches for the Parisian vaudeville stage:

'Beethoven does not concern me in the least. He was never perfect, nor first-class of his kind. Only children and quite young musicians should play his Sonatas, as we, in our youth, have all read those marvellous Indian romances. A resurrection of Beethoven is to my mind out of the question.'

One rather regrets to discover that, concerning the Festival, M. Vincent d'Indy finds it painful to encounter in such company a master like Maurice Ravel, and that the latter should commit himself to such remarks as the following:

'The theme of this "immortal masterpiece," the final movement from the ninth Symphony, might as well figure in a charming collection of Queen Hortense. Pardon my curtness (it is a pity—I had just meant to begin with my praise of Beethoven); but my work is calling me.'

To choose between obtrusive praise from non-musicians and such flippant remarks from musicians, is a dilemma. Meanwhile, and before the question is definitely settled as to whether the work of Messrs. Wiener, Auric, and the like will survive Beethoven, or *vice-versa*, let us state that the Vienna Beethoven Festival was a manifestation of how much the music of the Master still means to our generation, to all musicians not blinded by conflicting and confusing 'isms.' Musically, the first word at the Festival fell to Felix Weingartner and the Philharmonic Orchestra, with a short programme which formed the frame of the official addresses. The 'Cantata for the Death of the Emperor Joseph II.'—an early work from the Master's Bonn period, the MS. of which had long been lost and whose authenticity had remained doubtful until some forty years ago—opened the proceedings. The music hardly foreshadows the future greatness of the composer, and is interesting chiefly for a short allusion to the much later 'Fidelio.' To contrast this youthful essay, within the same programme, with an example from Beethoven's mature age, the Piano-forte Fantasy, Op. 80, was an ingenious idea. This work stands at the threshold of the 'late' Beethoven, and anticipates not only the character of the ninth Symphony, but even bears melodic relations to it. Weingartner's directing of the Cantata was of the kind which we have come to expect from this authentic Beethoven interpreter; in the Fantasy the ruggedness of the later Beethoven was rather obscured (partly through the fault of the pianist) by a 'Viennese' grace not quite well applied.

This is a characteristic that might well make the present 'popularity' of Beethoven rather regrettable. It is a tendency to degrade Beethoven into a 'tranquil composer'—to transform the lion into a complacent domestic cat. It is his mission as a prophet of freedom and humanity that renders Beethoven an ethical figure of high rank, and it is surely not an accident that he chose the book of 'Fidelio' and Goethe's revolutionary 'Egmont' drama as the subjects for his two important stage works. The Burgtheater's festival performance of 'Egmont' steeped this flaming document of freedom in an atmosphere of mild bourgeois boredom which was hardly relieved by Lotte Lehmann's soulful interpretation of the Klärchen songs and Felix Weingartner's vigorous conducting of the Master's incidental music.

Nor, so far as acting and staging were concerned, was the basic revolutionary idea clearly expressed in the Staatsoper's production of 'Fidelio.' Lothar Wallerstein, the new stage-manager, had unfortunately dispersed the beautiful old settings which Alfred Roller once designed for Mahler's production of this opera. The new Roller settings were sombre and sober, and the handling of the masses through Wallerstein far from convincing. Apart, however, from such reservations, which apply exclusively to the 'dramatic' side, the Vienna

Staatsoper's festival performance of 'Fidelio' was an achievement which few operatic theatres of the world could rival. Lotte Lehmann, singing the title rôle for the first time, was perfect vocally and histrionically, and even succeeded in evading the 'pathetic' fallacy in her spoken prose. She seemed carried away by the greatness of the task, and to outgrow the limitations of her at times somewhat 'passive' personality. Richard Mayr's humanly touching Rocco was the big figure of the cast, with Elisabeth Schumann and Hermann Gallo supplying the buffo couple, and Alfred Piccaver a Florestan more akin to Puccini than to Beethoven. Under Franz Schalk, the great and unsurpassed Beethoven conductor, the orchestra was incomparable. The 'Leonora' Overture No. 3 evoked an ovation from the internationally sprinkled audience such as the Staatsoper has hardly ever witnessed, the hearers standing and cheering the conductor for many minutes. It was a big night for the Vienna Staatsoper, which once more justified its rank as the finest operatic theatre in Europe.

This marvelous production of 'Fidelio' more than atoned for the shortcomings of another of the Staatsoper's contributions to the Festival, in the shape of a revival of the three-years' old production of Gluck's 'Don Juan' and Beethoven's 'The Ruins of Athens.' The latter work, which Richard Strauss staged here during his directorship of the Opera, is, as may be remembered, a pot-pourri from two almost forgotten 'occasional' compositions of Beethoven's—'The Men of Prometheus' and 'The Ruins of Athens.' This conglomerate Strauss has supplied with a connecting music which utilises a theme from Beethoven's fifth Symphony, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal has furnished a book which is perhaps less bombastic and more pretentiously 'literary,' but surely not happier, than that of Kotzebue to which Beethoven originally wrote this festival play.

The performance of Gluck's ballet and of other music not written by Beethoven himself was very wisely introduced in the Festival scheme by Prof. Guido Adler, the efficient organizer of the undertaking. If some wits had advised a 'Beethoven-less year' as the most appropriate and dignified celebration of the Centenary, the inclusion of much interesting non-Beethoven music represented as near as possible a compromise with this jocular advice. An 'historical' concert devoted to masters of the 18th century, under the baton of Robert Heger, must have given joy to the numerous musicologists assembled at Vienna for the simultaneous Congress of Musical History. It is rare that one finds an opportunity to hear so much music by J. J. Fux, Muffat, Albrechtsberger, Gottlob Neefe, or Georg Mathias Monn (whose Violoncello Concerto survives in an arrangement by Arnold Schönberg). More universally interesting, notwithstanding the brittle 'historical' character of the music, was a concert under the title 'Gothic Polyphony,' enlisting the services of the Staatsoper chorus and of that marvellously perfect organization known as the 'Sängerknaben'—the boys' choir of the old Imperial Chapel. It is gratifying to know that the existence of this body, whose destinies had been uncertain since the departure of the Imperial family (who had defrayed its maintenance), is now again insured, under the permanent conductorship of Franz Schalk.

In the nature of 'historical' music, too, was the first Viennese performance of Purcell's 'Dido and Aeneas,' coupled with Pergolesi's 'La serva padrona' and a ballet compiled by Strauss from Rameau music—both of the latter being familiar from previous performances here. The production of 'Dido' was not altogether happily conceived. It professed to follow the authentic version by Edward J. Dent, the eminent British musicologist, but the 'retouchings' attempted by Hans Gal, a young Viennese composer, trespassed on the sentiments of the Purcell specialists (a species very rare in Central Europe) among the visiting guests. The staging, under the direction of Marie Gutheil Schoder, was lavish—too much so, perhaps, and too pompous for the character of Purcell. Most interesting was the application of the chorus, in 'static' manner—the choristers being seated alongside the walls up-stage and singing from music sheets. Though this method was probably quite in keeping with the mission which Purcell

allots to the chorus, it emphasised, rather than relieved, the undramatic character of the work.

The conductor of this performance was again Schalk, who carried on his shoulders the lion's share of the Festival functions. Schalk, too, conducted a marvellous production of the 'Missa Solemnis,' the like of which Vienna had not heard in decades. An orchestral concert in which Weingartner gave his usual fine reading of the 'Eroica,' and in which Ignaz Friedman, the Chopin specialist, coped with the (for him) ungrateful task of interpreting the G major Pianoforte Concerto, also served for the rather disappointing conductor's débüt of Pablo Casals, with Beethoven's eighth Symphony. Both in respect of the conductor (Casals) and the soloist (Friedman) this concert could not be counted among the felicitous ideas of the Festival schedule. Nor, indeed, was a 'chamber concert' given in a big hall, which attempted the impossible by uniting three brilliant soloists—Friedman, Casals, and Bronislaw Huberman—into a pseudo-chamber ensemble, a happy idea. True chamber music, however, of the loftiest sort, was heard at the concert of the Rosé Quartet, which closed with the Quartet, Op. 130, and restored for this occasion Beethoven's original closing Fugue, Op. 133. If it be remembered that this fugue, indeed the whole Quartet, was once considered 'unplayable' and 'unintelligible,' and if hearers be resolved to remember this fact when confronted with the 'unplayable' and 'unintelligible' music of the present epoch, then the organizers of Vienna's great Beethoven Festival, and indeed Beethoven himself, will not have toiled in vain.

PAUL BECHERT.

'THE MERMAID'

The name of George A. Birmingham (Canon Hannay) should vouch for the plot of 'The Mermaid,' a light opera of dialogue, song, and chorus, produced by the Bermondsey Settlement Musical Society, at the Guildhall School of Music, on May 19. With his nonchalant humour the author asks us to believe in a queer tale—yes, to believe in it, for he does not, like the author of 'Iolanthe,' fuse the real and the unreal with that cunning alchemy that satisfies both the man and child in us all of the time. His tongue wanders in and out of his cheek with disconcerting unreason.

Michael Grady, a west Irish fisherman (William Groves, who reminded us of Walter Hyde), takes a fancy to a mermaid (Primrose Barr), and learns from an aged soothsayer (Ivy Webb, of youthful walk and cultivated Englishry) that the mermaid will follow him if he steals her cloak; which he does. She follows, bipedal and dressed to the admiration of the villagers. For trying to recover her cloak she is jailed by a sergeant of the R.I.C. (John Doherty, of a brogue as rich as his name). Let out on bail she haunts Grady until he is heartily sick of her. When finally the cloak is produced before the beak the mermaid regains it and her liberty. Grady's legitimate betrothed (Ruby Jenkins, a charming, bright soprano and a rather over-active actress), who has been giving friendly advice across the triangle, re-annexes her lad. This is a pretty picture for Birmingham the best-seller to fill with his engaging prattle of description and narrative; but the librettist, new to his job (one guesses), was not so clever as the novelist in handling his situations. Like the eminent musician who composed the music, the experienced author takes rank with other 'prentice hands in courting the shy muse of light opera. His lyrics, as far as we could hear them, were patly made; Gilbert—a touch of him ('problematical,' 'automatic'); a folly-oh, jolly-oh, quartet straight from Thames-side (with first-rate music to match, competition festivals please note).

The composer, Mr. Sydney Nicholson, like his predecessor at the Abbey, has a gift for bidding dull care begone. His music wears its smiling face and its bright colours naturally, fittingly, and all the more gracefully because the hand of a true musician has been at work. It observes all the jollities of light opera, even if it is apt to dodge the unities. While making Ireland its headquarters, it occasionally rushes off to Gloucestershire, Leipsic,

Nuremberg (for a moment), or Bond Street (for a phrase-ending). The cloistered composer is not so well acquainted with the world's thousand and one best tunes that he can always avoid all of them. One of the best things in the opera, a Trio sung by the sergeant, the colleen, and the witch, is frankly mock-Handel. All in all the music is of the right stuff—delicious stuff, a great part of it—but wanting in practical accomplishment for the particular job in hand. The writing of the choruses is excellent, and so was the singing of them. One seldom gets such delightful tone from the stage ranks, male and female. Mr. W. H. Bullock conducted an admirable gathering of forces, orchestral, choral, and principal. M.

Obituary

We regret to record the following deaths :

SAMUEL LANGFORD, at Withington, Manchester. Descendant of a long line of nursery gardeners, he carried on the business, and was a skilful grower, though always less interested in the commercial than in the aesthetic side of the craft. His bent towards music and literature was shown early, and while still in his 'teens he was an excellent pianist. When he was a few years over twenty he was sent to Leipsic Conservatoire, where he became a pianoforte pupil of Reinecke. He returned a well-equipped, all-round musician, catholic in taste, though with a strong leaning towards the romantic school, especially Chopin, in whose music he was heard at his best. Apparently he was never heard in public as a pianist, but to his friends his playing was a delight. He resumed the rôle of organist and teacher that he had already started before going to Germany, and later began his critical work by deputising for Ernest Newman, who was then music critic of the *Manchester Guardian*. On Mr. Newman's retirement from the post, about twenty years ago, Langford succeeded him—with some diffidence, for his literary efforts had hitherto been merely casual, and his reading, though wide, was unsystematic. Though he was over forty when he began his career as critic, he became in a short time one of the most distinguished of English writers on music, and during the remainder of his life no musical articles were better worth reading than those signed 'S. L.' That they called for some effort on the part of the reader was no drawback. Langford's was a speculative mind, and his leaning towards the abstruse was developed during his stay in Germany. Hence a unique quality in his critical writings that repelled the hasty reader, but almost invariably gave them permanent value. For he did much more than merely report a given performance. A comparatively unimportant recital would often evoke some first-rate writing on the music performed, or on some aesthetic or technical question suggested by it. Hence, to the casual reader, 'S. L.' often seemed to be over-discursive, 'in the clouds,' beside the point—anywhere, in fact, but on the spot. Yet to those who knew his work well, this type of notice showed his questing, well-stored mind working at its best.

Apropos of this aspect of his work, we quote from the obituary in the journal he served with such distinction :

It is one proof of his great capacity—some of those who knew him best and read him most carefully would not hesitate to say of his genius—that he soon came to be regarded less as the promising heir to a great tradition than as the founder of a new one not unworthy to be compared with the old. He shared with his predecessors an unusual technical equipment in the art of music, but he owed nothing to them directly, or, indeed, to anyone else, for the use he made of it. In everything he did he was original : in his thought, his speech, his writing. . . . Even good critics of music are apt at times to descend to the trite and conventional phrase, and, wearied by the frequent repetition of familiar works, to indulge in repetition themselves. Langford never did this, and the reason was that he was never bored by listening to good music. The music might be familiar to him, but it was never

stale, and it was capable of moving him to fresh and beautiful commentary, however often he heard it. It is our habit at Manchester to give three or four full-dress performances of 'The Messiah' every Christmas. Langford may have doubted the wisdom of this excessive concentration on one particular work, but his own notices went far to justify it. Year after year in the Christmas holidays he performed the miracle of writing three or four criticisms of Handel's masterpiece in a week, all of them entirely different from each other, all of them based on the actual rendering he had heard, and all of them informed by the delicate aesthetic taste and the massive musical common sense which governed all his criticism. Nor was it the only great occasion which called forth his full powers. A Gilbert and Sullivan opera, a newcomer making his first appearance at a small concert, or an open rehearsal by students, would set his musical imagination going just as actively as the bigger things, and he would clothe his thoughts about them in phrases so apt and spontaneous that sometimes it gave one a thrill to read them.

Such writing is too good to be allowed to vanish with the day's journal in which it appeared, and a collection of his most characteristic work ought to be made.

Of Langford the man—the queer, shaggy, attractive dreamer—more could be written than is convenient in this column. The subject is rather one for the biographer, and we can imagine few more attractive musical books than a study of 'S. L.' bound up with a selection from the columns he poured forth year after year.

JOHN BONHAM CROFT, Priest, at Old Lakenham Hall, Norwich, on May 6, aged seventy. For many years he was priest-organist at St. Matthew's, Westminster, where he developed a congregational use of plainsong that undoubtedly gave an impetus to the general revival of this ancient music, despite the fact that his versions were usually of a debased type. He took his plainsong from French service books compiled before the Solesmes revival. The music was tuneful, but often lacking in plainsong character—mainly because the modality had been watered down. Moreover, he did not hesitate to modify the melody considerably. In fact, there was justification for the purist's sniffing distinction between 'plainsong' and 'Croftsong.' Croft adapted seven complete Masses to English words, and became his own publisher, issuing the Masses, an Evening Psalter, and various other collections of liturgical music from his 'Plainsong Depot' at Westminster. His publications had for a long time a very wide vogue, but during recent years they have been in most places superseded by the purer forms of plainchant made available through the work of Palmer and others. To his large store of French Church music the 'English Hymnal' and other recent collections owe many excellent hymn-tunes of a popular and singable character.

SVEINBJÖRN SVEINBJÖRNSSON, at Copenhagen, on January 23. Born in 1847, at Nes, Iceland, he was for nearly half a century well known as a pianoforte teacher at Edinburgh, settling in that city after completing his musical studies at Leipsic. He travelled much, touring in Canada and America three times. After a stay of three years at Winnipeg, he returned to Iceland in 1922 to take up, under Government auspices, the work of developing music in his native country. The last two years of his life were spent at Copenhagen. He wrote and published many songs to English and Icelandic texts.

ALBERTO ZELMAN, at Melbourne, on March 3. The son of a well-known violinist and conductor, he was born at Carlton, on November 15, 1874. He took up the study of the violin, making a successful débüt at the age of six. For over thirty years he was a prominent member of the Melbourne Philharmonic Society Orchestra, later becoming conductor ; and he founded and conducted the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. For a long period he was associated with the Melbourne Conservatorium, and in many other ways was a prominent and successful figure in the musical life of Australia.

ROSA SUCHER, at Berlin. Born at Velburg, Bavaria, about 1850, she received her training as a vocalist at the Royal Music School, Munich. She married Josef Sucher, conductor at the State Opera, Berlin, where she later met with great success. For some years she toured the Continent and America in opera, and was also successful in many important music festivals. Although she made her mark first in light opera, she did her best work in serious rôles, and from about 1886-99 was prominent in the Bayreuth Festivals. She retired soon after that date.

At Durban (Natal), on March 26, G. ARTHUR HIGGS. He went to South Africa about thirty years ago to take up the post of organist and choirmaster at Bloemfontein Cathedral, afterwards occupying similar positions at Pretoria Cathedral and elsewhere.

Answers to Correspondents

Questions must be of general musical interest. They must be stated simply and briefly, and if several are sent, each must be written on a separate slip. We cannot undertake to reply by post.

L. G. A.—You ask if you were right in 'politely refusing' to accompany a solemn Passion hymn to the tune of 'Ye banks and braes.' It is a less easy question than you appear to think. We have just hummed 'Ye banks and braes' to the verse you quote, and it is a far better fit than many hymns and tunes of unquestioned respectability. No hard and fast principle can be laid down; each case must be judged on its merits. The two questions that should always be asked are: (1) Is the tune good and suitable to the words? (2) Is it likely to distract or distress by reason of secular associations? We think the answers in the instance you give are (1) Yes and (2) No. A supplementary question you should ask yourself is: Will my refusal to play cause more annoyance to the congregation than the playing will cause to me? For our part, we should have played the tune. In case you take the purist view as to the use of folk-song in church, we would remind you that the Passion Chorale was originally a love song, and that other well-known German hymn tunes were also secular in origin. The adaptation of such tunes may be carried to excess; we think it has been overdone in certain recent hymnals, where some melodies seem to have been included because of their folk origin rather than by reason of their musical value.

PIP.—You wish to teach your pupil to extemporise accompaniments to rhythmic drill and dances. From your description of her present ability it is clear that she must carry her study of harmony much farther—in fact, all the way. And she must be able to think easily in terms of music before there is chance of her being able to extemporise with the necessary fluency and rhythmic life. Knowledge of form is also necessary. The primers on extemporisation will help her but little, as they are designed for organists. As soon as she has a good grasp of harmony, she should take the shortest and simplest dances from the Suites of Bach and Handel and improvise movements on their pattern—remembering the importance of keeping the rhythm going even if the flow of melodic and harmonic invention dries up at times. She should gradually work on the more extended dances, the shorter Scherzi from Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas, the more characteristic of Mendelssohn's 'Songs without Words,' and short pieces by Schumann, Jensen, Heller, &c.

J. H. L.—The registration and pace of both movements must depend largely on the instrument and the acoustics of the building. You ask how you are to count 24-16 in the Bach Prelude: regard it as a form of 4-4, the sextolet groups being the unit. We have not the edition you quote, but we assume the Prelude is in D, on 'Vom Himmel hoch.' If so, we suggest for pace about crotchet = 60. Bar 12, with its effective combination of duplets, triplets, and sextolets, will call for slow thoughtful practice—manuals alone; R.H. and pedals; and L.H. and pedals. Play the Schumann Sketch with plenty of power in the first and last sections, and as quickly as is consistent with clearness.

F. W.—The 'programme' of Saint-Saëns's 'Danse Macabre' was given in this column a year of two ago. We dislike repeating it, but (for the last time) here it is: The composer was 'inspired' by some verses by Henri Cazalis, describing how Death (violin solo) tunes up at midnight in the graveyard, and plays a dance in which skeletons join. The 'effects' include the tuning of the solo violin's E string a semitone flat; xylophones to suggest the cheerful sound of rattling bones; some realistic chromatic wind-wails; and a cockerel on the oboe as a signal for the dancers to retire once more to private life—if it may be so called. The dance is in waltz form. Here is the poem:

'Zig et Zig et Zig, la Mort en cadence
Frappant une tombe avec son talon,
La Mort à minuit joue un air de danse
Zig et Zig et Zig, sur son violon.
Le vent d'hiver souffle, et la nuit est sombre ;
Des gémissements sortent des tilleuls ;
Les squelettes blancs vont à travers l'ombre,
Courant et sautant sous leurs grands linceuls.
Zig et Zig et Zig, chacun se trémousse,
On entend claquer les os des danseurs.'

Mais psit ! tout à coup ou quitte la ronde,
Ou se pousse, on fuit, le coq a chanté.'

F. E. E.—(1.) The short horizontal stroke means that the note over which it is placed should be given a little extra weight and deliberation in order to bring out its importance. When a dot is added to the stroke the note should be detached as well. (2.) In the bar you quote from Grieg's 'Album Leaf,' the inner notes should be shared between the hands according to their division between the staves—upper-stave notes, R.H.; lower, L.H. This plan is generally adopted in all such passage-work.

G. A. T.—'Score-Reading Exercises,' Daymond (Novello), 'One Hundred Graded Exercises,' Beck-Slinn (Weekes). For Transposition, in addition to the Warriner book (Novello), there are Edwards's 'One Hundred Transposition Tests' (Weekes) and Nichols's 'Transposition at Sight' (Reeves). An unfamiliar hymn-book will give you lots of excellent practice.

R.—(1.) In Harwood's Interlude in D we should regard the alternation of 6-8 and 2-4 as equivalents of quaver triplets and duplets; in other words, dotted crotchet = crotchet. This reading is supported by the use of an occasional duplet in a bar of 6-8. (2.) We know nothing of an organ composer named 'A. W. Bach.'

SUITE.—There is no single organ arrangement of the whole of Handel's 'Water Music'; but the several movements (or most of them) are to be found in various collections of arrangements by W. T. Best, issued by Novello, and Augener, and in the set of six Concertos put together by Best and published by Boosey. We know of no pianoforte version.

A. F.—Apparently there is little music written for violin, violoncello, and organ, beyond the Rheinberger examples, which you say you possess. There must, however, be many movements among the pianoforte trios, both classical and modern, that would lose little by the transference of the pianoforte part to the organ; some slow movements would even gain.

A. D. J.—The diploma you possess is quite a good one so far as it goes—which is not far enough for a professional teacher, we think. You are therefore wise in working for the higher distinction you mention.

TEPEE.—We are not quite clear as to whether you want a book on elementary harmony or one on the elements of music. But try J. A. O'Neill's 'The Theory of Music' (Novello).

OLD CHORISTER.—The only publication we know that gives information concerning choir-schools, &c., is 'The Choir Schools Directory' (St. Paul's Cathedral School, 1s. 2d. post free).

SIX-MILE CROSS.—We know nothing of the origin of the Welsh hymn melody 'St. Denis' ('E. H.' 407). Can a reader help our correspondent?

STUDENT.—Of the books you mention, we think that you will be suited by Buck's 'Acoustics for Musicians.'

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
The Quintessence of Delius. By Robert H. Hull	497
Ad Libitum. By 'Feste'	500
New Light on Late Tudor Composers. XXV. John Dowland. By W. H. Grattan Flood	504
Facsimile Letters No. 5: Ignaz Moscheles	506
Vivaldi and Stradella: A Recent Discovery. By Alberto Gentili	507
The Amateur String Quartet. By James Brown	508
The Pianoforte Compositions of César Franck. By Alfred Cortot (continued)	509
New Chapters in the History of 'Boris Godunov.' By M.-D. Calvocoressi	512
Some Economic Aspects of Orchestral Concerts. By Arthur T. Froggatt	513
The Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts. By Arthur T. Froggatt	515
Worthless Diplomas	515
The Musician's Bookshelf	516
New Music	516
Gramophone Notes. By 'Discus'	524
Player-Piano Notes	527
Occasional Notes	533
Church and Organ Music	534
Royal College of Organists	536
Letters to the Editor	536
Sharps and Flats	537
The Amateurs' Exchange	543
Royal Academy of Music	543
Royal College of Music	543
Trinity College of Music	544
The Associated Board: Award of Medals	544
London Concerts	545
Opera at Covent Garden	547
Competition Festival Record	548
The British Federation of Musical Competition Festivals	548
Presentation to Mrs. T. M. Bourne	551
Music in the Provinces	552
Bournemouth Festival	552
Beethoven's Flemish Origin	553
Sale of Wilhelm Heyer Collection of Autographs by Musicians	553
The Cascades Collection of Old Instruments	553
Music in Scotland	554
Music in Wales	554
Music in Ireland	555
Musical Notes from Abroad	556
'The Mermaid'	558
Obituary	559
Answers to Correspondents	560

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